

# THE LIVING AGE.

Seventh Series }  
Volume XXVII. }

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{ From Beginning  
Vol. CCKLV.

## CONTENTS.

I. The Threatened Re-Subjection of Woman. <i>By Lucas Malet</i>	FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW	705
II. The After-dinner Oratory of America. <i>By Daniel Crilly</i>	NINETEENTH CENTURY AND AFTER	716
III. The Falcon of the Fontarini. <i>By Nellie K. Blissett</i> (To be concluded.)	MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE	729
IV. Mountaineering of To-day	BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE	734
V. The Queen's Man: A Romance of the Wars of the Roses. Chapter XXI. (To be continued.)	MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE	746
VI. The Dublin School. <i>By C. W.</i>	ACADEMY	758
VII. Dulness	SPECTATOR	757
VIII. Pledges and Policies	ECONOMIST	760
IX. The Flight of Birds	OUTLOOK	762
X. Compulsory Greek. <i>By Andrew Lang</i>	LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE	765
XI. A Vicarage Garden. <i>By James Rhoades</i>	SPEAKER	768
XII. The Mad Spinner. <i>By Dorothy Frances Gurney</i>	ACADEMY	768
XIII. To a Chatelaine. <i>By Rosamund Marriott Watson</i>	PALL MALL MAGAZINE	768
BOOKS AND AUTHORS		767

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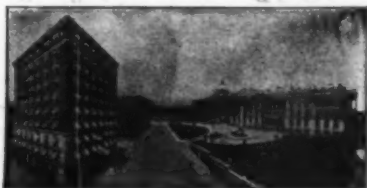
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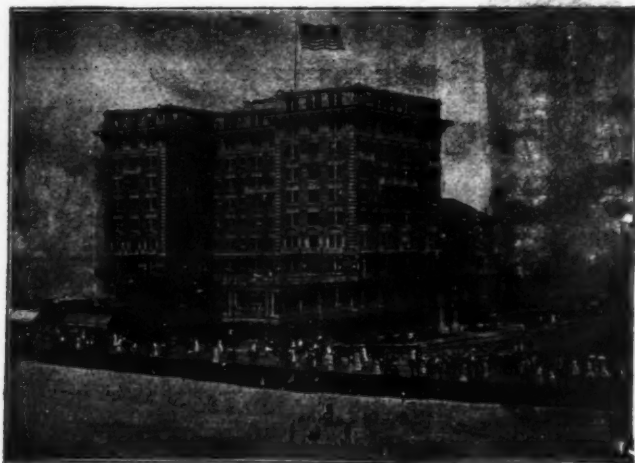
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(FOUNDED BY E. LITTELL IN 1844.)

SEVENTH SERIES  
VOLUME XXVII.

NO. 3180. JUNE 17, 1905.

FROM BEGINNING  
Vol. CXXLV.

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## THE THREATENED RE-SUBJECTION OF WOMAN.

Problems are admittedly at a discount just now. Our wants have become very simple. We ask two things only—to be amused and to be rich. Yet, like much else reckoned out of date and unfashionable, problems continue to present themselves with an irritating and ill-bred persistence, laying impeding hands upon us, as did the Ancient Mariner upon the Wedding Guest, to the destruction of the latter's enjoyment of the marriage festivities. Recently a problem, old as the dawn of human legend—some would, perhaps, say of human history, since that which produces legend must, one would imagine, rather necessarily precede it—has presented itself in a form arrestingly articulate and concrete. Essentially this problem is none other than that of Eden—the problem of the man and the woman, of the apple, and, incidentally, of the snake. A solution of it—I write with all reverence—was given at the time. But the race has advanced by giant strides—at least we are rather violently assured that it has—along the road of enlightenment since those dim and distant ages. Social and economic, even moral conditions,

have radically changed. Is it, then, conceivable that the original solution still holds good? That it remains the same to-day as then, the same on forever? A speaker, and one as the modern world goes worthy of more than passing attention, declares this to be the case with no uncertain voice. This gives food for reflection; the more that it has hardly been our habit to look to a presidential message to Congress for the enunciation of counsels of perfection, or to the people of the United States for subscription to primitive ideals in respect of social and domestic relations. Wherever on the face of this planet the earthly paradise, from which our first parents suffered just expulsion, may have been planted, we, as Europeans, have heretofore nursed a sustaining conviction it was very surely not on the existing site of Chicago, or even at Boston or New York. Consequently, some clauses in President Roosevelt's recent utterance are disconcerting, causing us a distinct shock of surprise. To ardent and sanguine spirits, enamored of theories of progressive social reform, they may very well cause a shock of rebellious anger

likewise. For these clauses undeniably justify the fear that in human affairs there is, actually, no such thing as full steam ahead; that of these, as of eternity itself, the symbol is not the straight line, but the circle—thus adding proof, were it needed, that the world is round after all, innocent of any "jumping off place," and that the saying "if you go far enough West you come East" holds a truth of deeper and more far-reaching import than the obvious geographical one. It is with this truth I would attempt briefly to deal.

Using the question of child labor and of the work of married women in factories as his text, President Roosevelt preaches the American nation a sermon involving very wide issues—issues so wide, indeed, that they affect the office and status of women in civilized communities all the world over and of every rank. "The prime duty of the man," he tells us, "is to work, to be the bread-winner; the prime duty of the woman is to be the mother, the housewife. All questions of tariff and finance sink into insignificance when compared with the tremendous, the vital importance of trying so to shape conditions that these two duties of the man and of the woman can be fulfilled under reasonably favorable circumstances." This is a return to first principles with a vengeance. It is also the seriously considered pronouncement of the popularly elected ruler of the most progressive nation of the world, in the first decade of the twentieth century. In reading it, one cannot but pause to picture, with a trifle of malicious gaiety, the sensations of all *féministes*, English speaking and Continental. To an experimental excursion into maternity, the offspring being limited to one, and that, of course, illegitimate, some among them might not so very much object. But marriage, housewifery, the permanent

subordination of the woman to the claims of the husband, the family and the household, this is rank heresy—heresy, moreover, seasoned with insult. President Roosevelt, however, leaves no loophole of escape. He makes his meaning perfectly clear. "If a race does not have plenty of children," he continues, "or if these children do not grow up, or if, when they grow up, they are unhealthy in body or stunted or vicious in mind, then that race is decadent, and no heaping up of wealth, no splendor of monetary prosperity can avail in any degree as offsets."

To those of us who are not *féministes*, and whose needs are not, as yet, wholly limited to the possession of wealth and practice of amusement, these utterances—when our first astonishment that such a gospel should derive from such a source is past—will appeal as sane and sound, a return to right reason and common-sense. Only, we cannot but ask ourselves, does not this return come too late? Is it possible thus to set back the hands of the clock, and eradicate tendencies which have been enthusiastically fostered during two generations in England, and are now in active development in various Continental countries? Is it possible to place woman again, in respect of her ideals and her romance, in the position of our great-grandmothers, without a rather deplorable uprooting, along with the tares, of the wheat? Without, in short, depriving her of advantages in education, in the tenure of property, in social and civic freedom, and, indirectly, of usefulness to the State, which she has so laboriously and, let it be added, so courageously acquired? Must not President Roosevelt's views, however interesting and theoretically admirable, be pronounced unpractical and impracticable, realizable perhaps by people of special temperament under special conditions, but incapable of moulding the thought and

habits of the bulk of any progressive nation in our present highly complex state of civilization? For, putting aside sentimentalism and faddist absurdities alike, it will be seen, I think, on closer analysis that the demand for self-abnegation on the part of a large section of our feminine population would be a very heavy one in thus setting back the hands of the clock. An intolerably heavy one, indeed, unless it be inspired and sustained by something far more intimately compelling, more appealing, more fruitful of inward consolation, than an obligation, real or imagined, of abstract patriotism. It must be remembered that the British mind finds curiously small motive-power in abstractions; while its patriotism, though ingrained beyond all question of doubt, is of the placid, take-it-all-for-granted sort. And if this is true of the average man, it is even truer of the average woman, the vast majority of whom are quite oblivious that they have a country unless the foreigner—individually or collectively—shows a disposition, of course wholly irrational, to attack it.

But to attempt that closer analysis. The different classes in England—and it is to England that I propose to limit my inquiry—shade into one another by such fine gradations that it is difficult to generalize concerning any one of them without risk of appearing superficial or arbitrary. Still, roughly speaking, it is among the women of the middle-class that this demand for self-abnegation would be most keenly felt, since it is they who have assimilated ideas of emancipation most freely and applied them most extensively to the conduct of life.

In the highest class the position and ideals of woman have changed very little under the new *régime*. She was always fairly well educated. She is so still. Marriage was her object, if not always her destiny. It remains so.

Owing to questions of inheritance, of title, of landed and other property, it was in the bond that she should bear children. The conditions remain the same; and, having a sense of honor, not, perhaps, altogether common to her sisters of less exalted rank, she has not, and does not now, shirk fulfilling her part of the bargain. Her attitude is almost that of the Jewess of the Old Testament; and to be childless is not only a sorrow, but something of a shame to her, she having thereby, missed her very *raison d'être*. She has always been in touch with sport, with politics, and with philanthropy; and though her activities in these directions may have multiplied, they flow in the same channels as of old. If she possess beauty and intellect, these enhance her personal value and increase her opportunities; but they do not alter the conditions of her existence to any appreciable extent. For in the highest class the man is very much master still, and the woman's life consequently shapes itself to his desires. Even if he marry some Transatlantic or Colonial millionairess, she has, sooner or later, to submit to the exigencies of her acquired position and come into line. Let it be understood that with this mastery the present writer has—kindly—no quarrel, protracted and dispassionate observation having convinced her that, though he does not always use his power very pleasantly, the man's way, on the whole, is best.

Of the working classes, the same is true. A few cruelties and crying evils have been mitigated by sentiment or legislation, yet practically the woman's position remains very much what it was fifty years ago. She is better educated; but this one regretfully hesitates to hail as an unmixed blessing. If it has somewhat enlarged her outlook, it has also increased her restlessness. While, once away from school, actualities of food, clothing, and pleas-

ure—of a not conspicuously elevated type—take her in their rather brutal grip, and she speedily forgets book-learning in learning of another and more vital description. But though education may go—it has hardly done more than scratch the surface of her mind as yet—the restlessness born of it stays by her. If country-bred she gravitates towards the towns, ostensibly in search of employment, actually in search of excitement. She prefers the shop or factory, however rough the labor or unwholesome the surroundings, to domestic service, because she “has her evenings” and can spend them as she pleases free of comment or control. Nevertheless, her ultimate object now, as heretofore, is marriage; her destiny, also as heretofore, too often the workhouse or the street. For causes not of property but of poverty, into which it is unnecessary to enter, she bears children; and that with an unrebelling endurance which, in face of the sordid miseries of her lot, would be heroic were not her attitude one of moral and physical indifference somewhat distressingly animal. In this class, too, the man is still master, and the woman's life shapes itself to his habits and his will.

There remains the great middle-class, using that rather ambiguous term in its widest acceptation. And it is here, from the daughter of the man in the services, the professions, or in business, to the daughter of small shopkeeper, national schoolmaster or clerk, that the so-called Woman's Movement in England has at once done most good and created most danger.

I propose to deal mainly with the sober-minded majority of this mass of contemporary humanity. But it is unavoidable, in passing, to make mention of a certain foolish contingent, whose aspirations are exclusively worldly, who ape the clothes and pastimes of their betters on insufficient incomes,

regard marriage as the gateway to cheap intrigue, and waste their time at ladies' clubs with much the same detrimental consequences to family and household as is the case with women of the people who waste theirs in the public-house. They are given over to that most deadly of all delusions—the Worship of Appearances—with the result that nothing is really genuine about them from their enthusiasms to the material of their underskirts. They are infected by a greed of notoriety, of publicity, of gadding. They must catch the eye and be talked of. But all this is expensive, especially in the case of persons of no intrinsic importance. Somebody has to pay the bill. It is idle to pretend it is always the husband who pays it. These are hard sayings. I can only regret that they are not unmerited. In respect of this contingent there is, incontestably, great need of reform; and one could wish President Roosevelt's utterances might not only be read, but be very thoroughly digested, by them. There would be a spice of poetic justice in this, moreover, since, if the antidote to these persons' foolishness hails from Transatlantic sources, the poison which has, in great measure, produced it hails thence likewise. Here we tread on delicate ground, and our way is beset by pitfalls! Let us hasten, then, to admit, at the outset, that there are probably mysteries of national character which must ever be impenetrable to the understanding of the foreign critic. Only the young and intemperate will venture to pass judgment upon the social standards and moral tendencies of an alien people in relation to its internal interests and home affairs. However impartial, one is liable to argue from too limited data, thus inviting the equally unilluminating and unanswerable rejoinder, “Oh! but you don't understand.” If this is true generally, it is particularly true of the

people of the United States, since—as Sir Henry Maine pointed out many years ago—the genesis of the great modern republic having no parallel in history, being a first-hand and unexampled experiment, it is altogether futile to dogmatize concerning its present or prophesy concerning its eventual development. Let every people, therefore, and specially this people, be exempt, not from observation—that is asking a little too much—but from premature and invidious comment, so long as it remains at home. When, however, it takes to coming abroad, bi-annually, in a mighty and locust-like host, when much of it not only comes, but “comes to stay,” the situation is changed. Under these circumstances even the most scrupulously discreet of critics may permit himself to register the effect of the invasion upon the social standards and moral tendencies of his compatriots and to state his conclusions in print, without any breach of international courtesy. And in all seriousness, I would submit that for the worship of the false God of Appearances, not to mention other delinquencies of the foolish contingent aforesaid, our American invaders—themselves mostly women—must be held responsible. Is it not they, to begin with, who in their republican simplicity, have reduced our many and complex needs to two only—possession of wealth and opportunity of amusement? The American woman is a somewhat glittering creature. Usually she is wholesome, intelligent, and—to decline upon the vernacular—“perfectly straight,” as well. Invariably she is very alert, very articulate, very self-confident. Her commercial instinct is strong, and in all her dealings she has a remarkable eye to the main chance. These may be qualities of eminent value in the evolution of the social system of a young country. In her natural environment and under

the stimulus of the American climate—a climate which makes for the development of nervous energy rather than for that of sex—she doubtless is, as she rather loudly claims to be, the very blossom and crown of things feminine. But here, in the old world, not only are surrounding conditions very different, but we women are made of slower, heavier, yet more passionate and dangerously inflammable stuff. Light without heat appears to be common enough in her case. In ours it is practically unknown. And so it is not possible for us to go the lengths she does in certain directions—take dress and flirtation as examples—without definite and highly undesirable results. It follows that, notwithstanding her brightness and, as a rule, her virtue, the influence of the American woman, not only in England but on the Continent, has been extremely harmful. It has made for frivolity, for extravagance, for selfishness. It has tended towards the decay of fine manners, towards lack of reverence and reticence, and an increasing impatience of restraint. It has brought us the interviewer—that enemy of the dignities of private life. It has taught us to spell society with a capital letter. It has, also, taught us the art of self-advertisement in all its branches. It has gone far to indoctrinate us with the hardly grace-begetting belief that everything in life, really worth having, can be bought for hard cash; and that it is the primary duty a self-respecting woman owes herself to be in a position to buy it. Again let me guard myself against misconception. I do not say this is the conscious creed or the constant character of the American woman—far from it. But I do say, secure of the support of many competent and unprejudiced witnesses both at home and abroad, that this is the creed and character which her presence and example is in process of



stamping upon a vast number of her European sisters. It is not one for which one can find it in one's heart to be grateful.

But to turn to a less perilous subject—namely, the effect of the Women's Movement upon the sober-minded majority of the English middle-class. It is from this class, with one or two well-known exceptions, that the feminine leaders in social, civic, and philanthropic reform have been drawn. It is from this class, too, that all the successful women come in professional, scientific, literary, and artistic attainment—let alone the rank and file of the great army of workers, school-mistresses, secretaries, nurses, typists, shop-assistants, and clerks. All these women have, in their degree, tasted the sweets of independence, the exhilaration of owning money honestly earned. The fact of doing work which has a market value has set them free from many superstitions and fears, and added a new dignity and flavor to existence. These women have also, in many cases, had sharp experience of the humiliation of keeping up an effect of gentility upon small means, and of the very practical discomforts, not to say indecencies, of large families and limited house-room.

The human heart, no doubt, remains fundamentally the same through all the changes of all the ages as far as its affections are concerned. But the modern young woman, if not a conspicuously seductive being with her inclination to leanness of body and deficiency of temperament, is an eminently clear-headed and practical one. Parents, querulous or irritable, permanently tired, harassed by petty anxieties, haunted by the spectre of debt, do not offer, to her thinking, a conclusive argument in favor of marriage. Hence it follows that she forms other ideals, and looks elsewhere for her romance. In this

class the man no longer is master. He has lost his prestige since the woman has pitted her brains, her mechanical skill, her physical endurance against his. He ceases to impress her from the moment she discovers she is competent to earn her own bread; and, as far as the ordinary conduct of life in a civilized community goes, to take care of herself. His weaknesses—and even his warmest advocates cannot but own that you have but to see enough of him to know that he has many, and those by no means exclusively of the proverbially masculine type—are patent to her. His nerves, his vanities, his jealousies, his endless power of fussing, cause her mirth when she is in a good temper, exasperation when she is in a bad. So that, while liking him greatly as a comrade, she quite honestly does not want him to develop into a lover, unless—for primitive instincts are not wholly exterminated in even these very emancipated maidens—he shows signs of developing into the lover of somebody else. Then, she has to make her choice. If she is self-respecting and high-minded, not being prepared to marry, she decides to rule love out. If, on the other hand, the emotional element is strong in her, she is much disposed to satisfy the propensities of her nature without sanction either of law or of church. Here is a danger likely, as things now stand, to suffer increase. For it must be remembered the modern woman treats most questions as open ones, and exercises the right of private judgment in regard of ethics as of all else. Her religion, when she still professes any, is usually devoid of the force of authority, vague, subjective, unscientific, or wholly conventional in character, an affair of feeling rather than of fact. And it must be accepted as an axiom, in respect of womanhood, that when faith ceases to be definite in doctrine and in outward practice, morals, at all events in the second gen-



eration, have a tendency to become most accommodatingly lax.

If the above is a fairly truthful picture, as I believe it to be, of the sober-minded majority of the English middle-class, is it reasonable, is it possible, to expect that such women, at the call of a remote obligation of patriotism and in altruistic self-devotion to the physical and mental amelioration of the race, will abjure work and decline—as far as the object and interest of their individual existence goes—upon a state of dependence and tutelage, knowing all the while that, since their own sex is numerically superior, there cannot, in plain English, be nearly husbands enough to go round?

Two other causes may be mentioned arising out of the complex and costly conditions of modern life, which further contribute to narrow the field of marriage and lessen its attraction for women of the middle-class. It is often asserted that men have grown more selfish. This, I think, is a calumny and a rather stupid one. Men—Englishmen—are exactly what they always have been, save that they are, perhaps, growing a little less lazy and a little more intelligent. They are in process of discovering what the modern woman has already discovered—namely that all achievement is based upon the rejection of the not-absolutely-essential, however unpleasant and even painful such rejection may be. They have further discovered that freedom is the first element in the attainment of success. Working women, of all people, have no right to quarrel with this, since the position is merely the converse of their own. Except in certain professions, or during the later stages of a public career, the possession of a wife and family presents an almost hopeless bar to promotion. Unless he has a large private income, the man who works must choose between ambition and domesticity, just as surely as the

woman who works must. Consequently, the ablest and cleverest men, those, in the estimation of the modern woman, most worth marrying, are those least likely to marry. If, having arrived at fame and fortune, such men do eventually marry, they tend to select wives, not from the ranks of their contemporaries in age and equals in birth, but from those of the younger generation and the aristocratic class. This may seem hardly fair, at first sight. But it is perfectly reasonable and perfectly natural, modern social requirements being what they are and human nature—specially masculine human nature—being what it is. Marriage by capture, in some form or other, will always obtain among the “braves” of a race.

The second cause contributing to lessen the attractions of marriage is one which can only be touched on with reticence and regret. Still observation unmistakably testifies to its existence, while indicating over-civilization as its origin. I refer to the decrease of the maternal passion among the women of the English middle-class. These women are not less courageous than their mothers and grandmothers. They have plenty of presence of mind. It does not occur to them to scream or to faint. But their courage is of the active and militant, rather than of the passive and silent sort demanded by the long *malaise* of child-bearing and the pains and perils of child-bed. They have something of a healthy man's disgust for invalidism, and his jealous care that the body, for work's sake, be kept active and fit. The minds of many of them, moreover, have been infected by the morbid views of certain feminine essayists and novelists who stigmatize child-bearing as a gross animal function against which refinement and what, by such persons, is known as the “higher morality” alike protest. If the race can only be con-

tinued by these repulsive methods, well then—they say—perish the race! The result is a singular one—an attitude of pitying contempt towards the mother, and of sentimental apology towards the children whom she has done the very doubtful kindness of bringing into the world. For these writers and talkers are confirmed pessimists at heart, without any sane and wholesome *jolie de vivre*—disappointed, discontented women who try to ease the smart of private failure by quarrelling with the laws of nature, not to mention those of grace.

In the eagerness of his advocacy of views diametrically opposite to the above, President Roosevelt goes so far as to hint at legislation. This, in our opinion, would constitute an unpardonable encroachment on personal liberty. In England we have not reached those altitudes of applied sociological science where it might appear justifiable to legalize the sacrifice of innocent individuals in the interests of the race. Legislation, moreover, would in this connection be useless if applied to the married only. It is no good locking the stable-door after the horse is stolen. If the woman's prime duty is that of housewife and mother, she must be trained on those lines and indoctrinated with the very beautiful sentiment inherent in them from childhood. As it is, her education—too often a system of cram productive of chronic mental dyspepsia—leaves her barely time for the acquisition of fairly good manners, and very certainly none for the cultivation of the fine art of domesticity. Her only relaxation from strain of mind in lessons is strain of body in games. She is always in a hurry—that most unlovely thing in woman! What can she know of the endless silent adjustments of sympathy, the perpetual vigilance masked by suavity, the consideration for the comforts, not to say the stupidities and eccentricities of others,

which are the very foundation of any gracious and happy conduct of a household? She hardly knows the cost of the clothes she wears. She is wholly ignorant of that of the food she eats. If, when her school-days are over, she takes up some wage-earning work, her disqualifications are increased. For the girl who has once experienced the joys of independence, even the minor excitements of going forth daily to business, be that business never so mechanical, by tram or train, or 'bus, finds the confinement of home-staying and the manifold detail of housekeeping intolerable. She has, in point of fact, become nomadic—the artificial nomad of the overgrown cities and suburbs of modern civilization, a wholly different being to the natural nomad, wandering, sun and wind enchanted, across the vast untenanted spaces of this most goodly earth. She has no use for a house save to change her clothes and sleep in. A single-room lodging and a restaurant to eat at please her far better than any home, since the latter necessarily implies restrictions and obligations, and these irritate her. She counts them a waste of time; her desire for beauty and dignity in her personal surroundings being scanty, and her desire for repose non-existent. If she should unluckily break down in nerves or in health, are there not rest-cures and hospitals, where that which is physically necessary can be done for her at the price of a moderate cash payment? A sympathetic atmosphere, refinements of privacy, a shrinking in illness from the touch of strange hands and sight of strange faces—to all these she is curiously blunted and indifferent.

What, then, about her future, both as to her individual happiness and her office in the modern state? The women of the aristocratic class and the women of the people, in relation to whom man is still autocratic, have been proved to be practically unaffected by

the emancipatory movement of the last half century. So it is solely the women of the middle-class, of the democratic and progressive class, broadly speaking of the intellectual and artistic class, in respect of whom we appear to have arrived at this *impasse*. These women, who should, from their intelligence and ability, supply a supremely valuable element in the life of the nation and development of the best tendencies, mental and physical, of the race, are precisely those who repudiate all responsibility in these matters. You may charm the laborer back to the land by the bribe of ownership, though the freehold offered him be of the smallest extent; for land-hunger is still strong in all those whose forefathers have had intimate dealings with mother-earth, learnt her lore, and worshipped at the shrine of her ancient deities. But by what form of bribery, by what appeal to the magic of hereditary instinct, you can charm the New Woman—sexless, homeless, unmaternal as she increasingly is—back to the store-closet and the nursery, it is difficult, indeed, to say! Therefore, while admiring President Roosevelt's sane and simple view of the relation of the sexes, and believing that under less disastrously complex conditions it would make for the good of the State and the happiness of the individual alike, we are constrained to pronounce that view visionary and chimerical, a counsel of perfection for elect souls, but useless as leverage for the mass, unless some more potent factor than an obligation of abstract patriotism enters into the question; unless—to return to our first contention—having gone far enough West we are in very truth coming East, and that with direct and far-reaching results. Should this prove to be the case, President Roosevelt's views—both as quoted at the beginning of this article from his message to Congress, and as more recently set

forth by him in his address to the American National Congress of Mothers—may very well cease to be reckoned visionary, and be welcomed as prophetic, the declaration by one man of ideas which gradually and as yet, for the majority, unconsciously are affecting the thought and purpose of all. Mysterious influences, coming one knows not whence, at times sweep over the minds of nations as the wind sweeps over a field of wheat. Every head must bow before them, willingly or not, and bow in a common direction under the compelling force of a power unseen but absolute. Are there not signs that in English-speaking Protestant countries we are on the eve of some remarkable and widespread *influencing* of this sort? Men and women will deplore it as retrogressive and reactionary, or hail it as full of healthful promise, according to their personal convictions and temperament; but its existence no serious student of contemporary affairs and contemporary thought will deny. To give instances. In the department of politics, are not the divided counsels and apparent collapse of the Liberal Party, the growth of Imperialism, with its twofold consequences of commercial expansion and militarism, among such signs? In the department of science is not the revolt from materialism, the unaggressive, even friendly attitude adopted by the younger physicists and biologists towards mental and spiritual phenomena a sign? While in the department of religion, the unostentatious yet steady advance of the great mother church of Christendom, despoiled, penalized, scoffed at in England as obscurantist during close on four centuries, forces recognition that not only the logic of history is with her, but the even more convincing logic of the needs and aspirations of the human heart.

In truth it is hardly too much to assert that most of the beliefs in which

we, of the elder generation, were brought up have been a good deal discredited by experience, and having been given sufficiency of rope, seem rather effectually in process of hanging themselves; or, to put it alike more justly and more gratefully, having served their turn, and done their appointed work, are in process of dying. Let us bury them not without tears, for they, too, had their days of effulgence and golden hope, such as, whether justified by the event or not, remain a precious asset in human history. Is the Woman's Movement among these? This one wonders a little and asks, though conscious it would be premature to attempt a definite answer, whether negative or affirmative, as yet. The next ten years will decide, in this as in much else of vital interest to the humanist, whether the reaction, of which we have already spoken, is to be a thing of really fundamental and permanent force.

But assuming, for the sake of argument, that the Woman's Movement has run its course and is doomed to dissolution, of this we may, I think, be certain, that, as far as our own country is concerned, its death will be a painless one, brought about not by violence, but by inanition, by a process of conversion from within the ranks of the feminine army, not by coercion from without.

Any active interference with, or limiting by legislation of the intellectual, social, and civic freedom which women have gained for their sex is not to be feared for a moment. It is contrary to the temper of English sentiment, and to the sense of justice and common-sense of our countrymen. The doors which women have forced will remain open; but it is to be seen whether, as time goes on, unless driven to do so by the push of some exceptional talent or by the push of poverty, women will continue to go forth

through those doors into the strain and stress of the working world.

The woman of conspicuous gifts, still more the woman of genius, will continue to go forth. She has done so in the past. She will do so in the future. But she is a law unto herself. Neither the closing nor opening of doors makes much difference to her. She will stir the hearts of men, and generally contrive to break her own, on to the end of the earthly chapter. One does not pity her, nor does one greatly envy her. For to possess the dual nature—a man's brain and ambitions, and woman's capacity of loving and suffering along with that most intricate and capricious piece of mechanism, a woman's body—is, indeed, to dwell in a city divided against itself and to be unevenly yoked with an unbeliever. Probably it is the most enlightening of all human experiences. Certainly close observation of such rather cruelly over-endowed beings tends to the conviction that it must, also, be among quite the most agitating and dangerous.

The woman who is compelled by circumstances to earn her livelihood will likewise continue of necessity to go forth—but for her those open doors are an incalculable gain. They at once simplify and dignify her outlook. In all departments of modern activity the tendency is towards specialization; and it is not improbable that the educated working women of the future will come to form a caste apart, ruled by its own standards of loyalty and honor, its own organizations, its own laws written and unwritten. This caste will be recruited not only from among those who must work, but from among those—there will always be a fair number of such—whose intelligence is in excess of their emotional capacity, women who, even though they have money and position, definitely prefer celibacy to married life. These single

women—as distinct from unmarried women—are healthy, sensible, and notably useful persons. They are, it may be added, exclusively a product of the Anglo-Saxon race. As an example and encouragement to their less happy sisters, who are constrained to work not because they covet to do so but because they must, these women are invaluable. One looks at them with deep respect, for they are never among the sinners. Then one restores the balance of one's self-esteem by the reflection that, also, they are never among the saints.

But a very large majority of the young women who have recently affected to despise mankind and clamored for the right to live their own lives belong to neither of the above orders. They have merely been affected by a prevailing fashion. Let the fashion change, their views will change along with it; and it is they who, though the doors still stand open, will exhibit no over-mastering desire to cross the threshold. For is it not among the constant characteristics of the feminine mind—a mind, from the beginning of things, somewhat perversely addicted to experiment—that complete liberty to act in a given manner takes away the desire so to act? Remove the prohibition and, in nine cases out of ten, you remove the inclination likewise.

Therefore, if some great reaction in thought and practice, such as we have attempted to indicate, does actually obtain, there will be no valid cause for tears or lamentation in regard to even the middle-class, modern English-woman. No cruelties will be inflicted upon her. She will be subjected to no serious hardship, for she will be not a victim but a consenting party. The exaggerations, the abnormalities and absurdities engendered by the Woman's Movement will vanish, borne away by

the breath of that strange wind of destiny which sweeps across the human field of wheat—and a very good thing too, for undoubtedly the movement has given rise to a large amount of peculiarly pernicious nonsense in speech and thought—but solid advantages will remain both to individuals and to the mass. The history of the Agricultural Laborers' Union offers, in this connection, a parallel eminently to the point. True it is now a thing of the past, yet its effects are in many respects permanent and very beneficial. It has changed the status of the English laborer, conferring upon him rights of which he cannot be deprived, and which give him weight and importance in the corporate life of the nation. Broadly speaking, the Union has raised him from the position of a serf to that of the responsible citizen. And something closely approaching this, even though it develop no further, even though it suffer speedy dissolution, the Woman's Movement will have effected for the women of the English middle-class. It has made the way of the girl who must needs earn her own bread far easier, both in opportunity and in social consideration. While for those who are not compelled to labor it has created opportunity also. Motherhood and housewifery may once more become for them the object and the ideal. But the middle-class woman will approach these things from a different level, since her position has been changed and raised. In many directions she has proved herself competent; and it is impossible that, though she devote her life to the bearing of children, the ruling of servants, and the keeping of house, according to the fashion of the women of past generations, she should ever decline again, unless she herself wills it, to the level of the mere play-thing, chattel, or squaw.



## THE AFTER-DINNER ORATORY OF AMERICA.

The after-dinner speech of America is framed in a peculiar and distinct reputation of its own. It is a phase of intellectual effort that has no counterpart elsewhere. The popular conception of it existing on this side of the Atlantic associates it with good stories, riant humor, graceful rhetoric, quaint conceits, and a genius for dexterously manipulating and alternating in a brief compass the lighter and graver shades of thought. To reach the accepted standard of American criticism it must have all the choice qualities of Sheridan's dialogue. It must be a gem in prose as one of Austin Dobson's masterpieces is in poetry. It must sparkle and effervesce like the higher brands of champagne. It must be as spontaneous, or at all events, appear to be as spontaneous, as the irrepressible waters of a mountain spring. The man who labors with an after-dinner speech in Boston or New York is lost. It will not, however, appear surprising that this post-prandial eloquence of America has won for itself a unique fame when it is remembered that amongst those who have frequently responded to the toast-master's call in that country have been such men as Oliver Wendell Holmes, James Russell Lowell, Mark Twain, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Colonel John Hay, Edmund Clarence Stedman, William Cullen Bryant, George William Curtis, William Dean Howells, Whitelaw Reid, Charles Dudley Warner, Joseph Hodges Choate, and Chauncey Mitchell Depew. For what a wealth of charming, playful, gossamer fancies these names stand! The very mention of them conjures up delightful visions of festive boards from which a stern decree of outlawry banishes everything hostile to genial friendship, buoyant gaiety, and robust cheerfulness. A

random summons to any one of this goodly company never failed to find an expert in the dainty art of illustrating how possible it is that "a man may say a wise thing though he say it with a laugh." And in the case of the men whom I have named, as well as of others whom I might readily cite, their laughter was always healthy, stimulating, and contagious, for the simple reason that the happy humor which provoked the hilarity was never sour nor cynical nor calculated to leave a wound behind. To these fellows of infinite jest the tribute which Moore paid to the author of *The School for Scandal* might well be extended—

Whose humor, as gay as the fire-fly's  
light,  
Played round every subject and  
shone as it played,  
Whose wit in the combat, as gentle as  
bright,  
Ne'er carried a heart-stain away on  
its blade.

There is no difficulty in comprehending why a social function which held within itself the power of attracting the presence of men of this stamp should steadily develop into a permanent feature of American life.

It would be an interesting, and probably an entertaining, enterprise to trace systematically the evolution of the after-dinner speech of America. Doubtless there was a time when the accompaniments and surroundings of a public dinner in London and New York were practically alike in their details. However great may have been the difference between the dispositions and constitutional theories of the early Hollanders of the settlement on the Hudson and the incoming New Englanders, and however marked the con-



trast may have been later on in the same respects between the type that sprung from the union of these two and the stay-at-home Briton, all of them came ultimately to offer a common allegiance to the seductive autocracy of an all-powerful chef. Hollander, New Englander, and Briton alike drifted pacifically and unresistingly to the comforting conclusion that the psychological moment at which human nature found itself best fitted to exalt human virtues, and to extend a sweet forbearance to human weaknesses, followed immediately on a generous and ungrudging satisfaction being given to a patient and waiting appetite. It was discovered that at that precise juncture a benign *pax vobiscum* held sovereign sway. So men came together around a dinner table to do honor to some special or distinguished guest, or to celebrate some conspicuous national event in which the people at large took a legitimate pride. The early fashion on those occasions, on both sides of the Atlantic, was to do justice to a toast-list, which was kept within moderate limits, in speeches, eloquent occasionally but serious at all times. The age then took its responsibilities with greater gravity than ours, I am afraid, is in the habit of doing. Culture had not learned how to disport itself so cunningly as it does nowadays. Hence, even in America, if an orator had the temerity to lean towards anything savoring of levity in proposing, or responding to, a toast such as "The Day We Celebrate," or "The Memory We Honor," his conduct would be resented with something like the indignation shown by a few over-sensitive American Dutchmen when Washington Irving, masquerading as Diedrich Knickerbocker, published his inimitable *History of New York*. But "old times are changed, old manners gone," as a convenient illustration may serve to show. There is still extant a speech

delivered at the annual dinner of the New England Society of New York in 1850 by Daniel Webster, a name famous in the annals of American statesmanship. This speech, which runs to a considerable length, was one made in response to the toast of "The Constitution and the Union." It is full of noble eloquence and virile thought, and is inspired throughout by a lofty sentiment of patriotism. There is, however, no note of humor in it, nor does it contain a single anecdote or an amusing story which might have tickled the orator's fellow-diners. The report of the speech is plentifully studded with "prolonged applause," "tumultuous applause," and "loud and repeated cheers," but there is a notable absence of any record of "laughter." This rigidly earnest and strenuous style of address suggests itself as being in natural keeping with the accepted character of that uncompromising zealot—the Puritan of Plymouth Rock, whose achievements as a pioneer settler, and a model in qualities of ascetic self-denial which his descendants have scarcely maintained in their integrity, are commemorated annually, on the 22nd of December, at numerous choice and high-class dinners promoted in leading American centres by a multitude of New England societies.

The more modern taste, however, is not so exacting as that which seems to have ruled in Daniel Webster's day. Even the grim Puritan tradition, with all its warp and woof of austerity and aloofness from frivolity, now finds itself used as a toy and sported with by the Bohemianism of the after-dinner speech. The same New England Society of New York, which was stirred to enthusiasm half a century ago by Webster's impassioned periods, honors the memory of the men of the *Mayflower* in our time by laughing boisterously at the merry sallies of such exemplary Puritans as Mark Twain

and Chauncey M. Depew. It is extremely improbable that the Pilgrim Fathers ever frittered away a moment idly by speculating as to whether or not they were destined to fill a niche in history. But if they ever weakly allowed such a piece of vanity to force its ungodly way into their thoughts for a passing instant, they were happily saved, it is to be hoped, from any fore-knowledge of the nature of the verbal homage that would be paid to their record and character on the approach of the twentieth century. One can imagine the pang of horror, the agony of affliction, and then the righteous rage which would have overtaken that stalwart Puritan divine, Cotton Mather, if he had been present, say, at the annual dinner given by this New England Society of New York exactly fifty years after the one at which Daniel Webster spoke. I mention this dinner, not because there was anything exceptionally remarkable about it, but simply because fifty years is a nice round period. It was held in the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel on the 22nd of December, 1899, and we may assume that it was sumptuously served. The chair was occupied by the president of the society, Judge Henry E. Howland, and his introductory after-dinner speech, which framed a fine panegyric of the olden Puritans, exhibited the usual happy blend of good stories and polished rhetoric. Cotton Mather might have tolerated the rhetoric, but his leniency, it is to be feared, would scarcely have extended to the stories. As he listened to them, and associated them with the delicacies of the table, which had just been cleared away, there would have been considerable danger of his angrily demanding if the levity in speech and the riotousness in living, which had cost an English king his head, had returned to the land? His first shock, in all likelihood, would have come with Judge Howland's first

story. That story is reported in this fashion:

The grim, stern Puritan, with the austere face and peaked hat, and the lean, wild, loping Indian are here supplanted by a company whose well-rounded figures and genial faces reflect the assurance of the possession of skyscraping buildings, pipe lines, through lines, warehouses, well-stuffed deposit vaults, and comfortable bank accounts (laughter), upon whom smile from those boxes the blessings which, like those of Providence, come from above (applause) and cause us to echo the sentiment unconsciously expressed by the lady who was distributing tracts in the streets of London. She handed one to a cabman; he glanced at it, handed it back, touched his hat, and politely said: "Thank you, lady, I am a married man" (laughter). She looked nervously at the title, which was, "Abide with me" (laughter) and hurriedly departed. Under this inspiration we agree with the proverb of the Eastern sage: "To be constant in love to one is good; to be constant to many is great" (laughter). But we must remember, while the critical eyes of our households are upon us, that our halos will never be too small for our heads" (laughter).

After this, if the Puritan divine remained calm enough to venture on a piece of criticism, he would probably say that in the following story Judge Howland pointed an important historical truth by a frivolous illustration:

The archbishop and ministers of King James, who drove these men and the 26,000 who followed them, the flower of the English Puritans, from England, like Louis the Fourteenth, when he sent the Huguenots into exile by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, furnished an example to that master of the school where the Eton system of flogging prevailed. On a Saturday morning the delinquents were called up to be flogged. One of the boys inquired, "What am I to be punished for, sir?" "I don't know, but your name is down on the list, and I shall have to go through with it," and

the flogging was administered. The boy made such a fuss that the master looked over the list on his return to his rooms, to see whether he had made a mistake, and found that he had whipped the confirmation class (laughter).

Another story told by Judge Howland would scarcely fall with any more soothing effect on the mind of Cotton Mather, who would likely, instead of being moved by a sense of humor, see in the recital only a spirit of shocking irreverence:

There have been times in the later history of the country when the Puritan was not altogether popular, and the feeling entertained towards him and his descendants was expressed like that at a Liberal meeting in Scotland, where the proceedings were being opened by prayer, and the reverend gentleman prayed fervently that "the Liberals might hang a' thegither." He was interrupted by a loud and irreverent "Amen" from the back of the hall. "Not, O Lord," went on the clergyman, "in the sense in which that profane scoffer would have you to understand, but that they may hang thegither in accord and concord." "I dinna care so much what kind of a cord it is," struck in a voice, "sae lang as it is a strong cord" (laughter).

This close association of prayer and laughter would again grate harshly on the listener's ears in the succeeding illustrations of the Judge:

Fortunately for them, and perhaps for the world, opinions differed enough to give them a chance. "You can't always tell," said a man, at the end of a discussion, "what one's neighbors think of him." "I came mighty near knowing once," said a citizen, with a reminiscent look, "but the jury disagreed" (laughter). But with the Puritans, when discussion ceased and other arguments began, the result was like that when the lady said to her clergyman, who was paying her an afternoon call, of her little boy, who bore the

marks of a struggle: "Johnny has been a bad little boy to-day; he has been fighting, and has got a black eye." "So I see," said the clergyman. "Come into the next room with me, Johnny, and I will pray with you." "You had better go home," replied Johnny, "and pray with your own little boy; he has got two black eyes" (laughter).

In this way the chairman of the ninety-fourth anniversary banquet of the New England Society of New York, only following, it must be said, the fashion of the day, seemed to take a reckless delight in keeping up a running fire of playful anecdotes, just allowing his hearers to pop up their heads for a second or two between the discharges to catch a fleeting glimpse of the actuality of the struggle and endurance of the old-time Puritans. From these two commemorations which I have instanced, both organized to do honor to the fame of the men of the *Mayflower*, we can gather in a general way the measure of the change which came over the form and matter of the after-dinner speech in America between the earlier years and the end of the late century. In the 1850 speech of Daniel Webster we find a high strain of stately eloquence unbrokenly preserved. In the 1899 speech of Judge Howland we meet with more composite art, and we are almost coerced into admiration by the singularly fearless way in which the effects of light and shade are handled. Eloquence befitting the theme of the orator is plentifully in evidence, but the interval is never very long until this is made to merge adroitly in the humor which is drawn from the light comedy of some felicitous illustration. That there never was the remotest danger of the tension becoming strained will be obvious when I say that the Judge told no fewer than fifteen stories, and that in the report of his speech "laughter" is bracketed in as many as twenty-five

different places. Nor, as compared with other speakers on like occasions, was Judge Howland extravagantly facetious. The speech was a fair, average sample of the method of treatment meted out post-prandially to all kinds of toasts, grave and gay alike, at the public-dinner tables of America. Take, for instance, an achievement which lies to the credit of General Horace Porter. The General would appear to have been in much demand at these anniversary dinners of New York's New England Society, and, in glancing at the reports of four different speeches of his, we find that the good things said by him in the course of them were so provocative of hilarity that "laughter" is duly recorded no fewer than seventy-eight times. It is not an unreasonable supposition that the grim and sombre personalities whose memories were being honored by General Porter and his friends found themselves, when in the flesh, so weighted down by solemn contemplation of spiritual problems that they never laughed so often in the whole course of their lives.

It has to be remarked, further, that the rôle of chartered jester on these occasions is not a monopoly in the hands of the mere layman. Staid and sober-minded clergymen at these festive gatherings have no hesitation in entering the lists as rivals to judges or generals, or, indeed, to all comers. Even the Bench of Bishops has been known to put aside its episcopal dignity for the time being to make fun out of the Puritan legend. As guests of the New England Society, Mark Twain and Chauncey M. Depew have ruthlessly smitten *ennui* and prim formality, but neither of them, at his best, was ever more riotously jocular, in the character of a modern Puritan, than such reverend gentlemen as Dr. Henry C. Potter, the Protestant Bishop of New York, Rev. Henry Ward Beecher,

Rev. Dr. de Witt Talmage, and the Rev. Joseph H. Twichell, of Hartford, Connecticut. We might, if we sought to establish in fancy an English parallel to these enjoyable American functions, imagine a dinner given in commemoration of the acquittal of the seven bishops, or as a tribute to the memory of John Knox, at which the leading toasts would be entrusted to distinguished ornaments of the Church and State, who, in preparing their orations, would have to be most particular in blending artistically with any historical or philosophic observations that they might make a due proportion of the peculiar material which goes to make up the letterpress usually found in association with the art of John Leech, or Charles Keene, or Phil May.

That we have to invent such a supposition shows how far asunder the conditions of after-dinner speaking in England and America have drifted. In London those who rise to speak at the Lord Mayor's hospitable board take their keynote from the gravity of a Prime Minister. If the fashion of New York crossed the Atlantic a Mansion House dinner or a Royal Academy banquet would lose much of its present formidable solemnity, and the reports of the proceedings in the ensuing issue of the daily papers would offer more cheerful reading than one finds embodied in them under existing circumstances. It may be true, of course, that no fair comparison can be instituted between a Puritan anniversary dinner in New York and a Mansion House banquet in London. But we can get over this difficulty, however, and have none of our impressions disturbed, by taking a class of dinner which is common to both countries. Starting, as it were, on equal terms, nothing, perhaps, could bring out more effectually the contrast between the two styles of after-dinner eloquence, or could be at the same time

more typical of the national temperament, than the oratory heard at the dinners of those Chambers of Commerce which guard the interests of trade on either side of the ocean. On the one hand, the speeches, reflecting a disposition inclined to be somewhat volatile, are as full of change and variety as the *menu* is full of an assortment of skilfully contrived dishes; while, on the other hand, they are so undeviatingly substantial in statement and argument as to be at once suggestive of that generous roast beef which stands universally for British solidity. Charles Kingsley, in his introduction to *Alton Locke*, addressing John Bull, says: "You are always calling out for facts, and have a firm belief in salvation by statistics. Well, listen to a few." Kingsley's observation would make an admirable general motto for the toast lists of the dinners of English Chambers of Commerce. It may be said that invariably at these functions every fresh speech is but an echo of one that has gone before. A long array of statistics, pictures of the fluctuation of trade, the proper interpretation to be put on the rise and fall of prices, the moral to be drawn from the table of the year's exports and imports, a homily on the danger to British markets that lies in foreign competition—these trite, if not very inspiring, topics may be reasonably taken as representing pretty exhaustively the subject-matter of all that is said at England's mercantile feasts. But our American neighbors take a more catholic view of the possibilities of a Chamber of Commerce dinner. They seem to think that the gratuitous imposition of a further course, consisting of unrelieved statistics, as a sequel to the many other courses which have already been served, would lamentably jeopardize that good digestion which Shakespeare hoped might always wait on appetite. Hence when the mercan-

tile magnates of an American city come together to dine they do not lay it down as an inflexible rule that the sentiments which find expression when the dessert stage of the banquet has been passed must savor exclusively of a bill of lading or the columns of a ledger account. The whimsical phrase, the inevitable anecdote, the fine literary turn of thought, are as common here as they are elsewhere. Those who think that the more delicate phases of art, literature, or philosophy should only be revered and expounded in an inner circle of superfine intellectual culture, far removed from the common skirts of the madding crowd, will doubtless regard it as insufferably incongruous that the following exquisitely happy word-picture of the dainty genius of Washington Irving should grow to life at a mere Chamber of Commerce dinner. The sad fact remains, however, that Mr. George William Curtis spoke in this fashion of the genial author of *The Sketch Book* at the annual banquet of the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York in November 1890:

Our sombre colonial writing was all sermon. It was not until 1809 that Mr. Buckminster, the orator of the Phi Beta Kappa at Harvard, said that the genius of our letters began to show signs of greater vigor; and in the same year a young man, who, as a boy, to escape the rigors of domestic religious discipline, used to drop out of the window of his father's house in William Street in the evening, and steal off to the play around the corner in John Street, published a book called Knickerbocker's *History of New York*; and in the gay genius of Irving, American literature escaped the sermon and came laughing into life. The winter of our long literary discontent was made glorious summer by this son of York. . . . What a sweet and blameless genius it was! It aroused no passion, no prejudice, no hostility. Irving was popularly beloved, like Sir Walter



Scott, and I recall the amusing enthusiasm with which a party of Germans in Berlin, upon discovering that I was an American, exclaimed: "Ah, we know full well your great general, Washington Irving" (laughter)! He touched our historic river with the glamour of the imagination. He invested it with the subtle and enduring charm of literary association. He peopled it with figures that made it dear to the whole world, like Scott's Tweed, or Burns's Bonny Doon. The belated wanderer, in the twilight roads of Tarrytown, as he hears approaching the pattering gallop behind him, knows that it is not his neighbor; it is the Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow. It is not thunder that we hear in the Katskill on a still summer afternoon, it is the airy game of Hendrik Hudson's crew that Rip Van Winkle heard. The commerce of New York may penetrate every sea, and carry around the world the promise of the American flag and the grandeur of the American name, and return triumphant with the trophies of every clime; but over their leagues of wharves and towering warehouses and far-stretching streets can it throw a charm, as fresh to the next century as to this, such as the genius of literature cast upon the quaint little Dutch town more than two centuries ago, and upon the river which is our pride?

It will be at once apparent that it would utterly unsettle the balance of the reputation which the national after-dinner oratory now enjoys if such charming specimens of graceful eloquence as those of Mr. Curtis were to be widely adopted as models, and so to keep the adjustment straight and to safeguard the vested rights of humor the full prerogatives of the cap and bells obtain distinct recognition even under the roof-trees of the Chambers of Commerce. The same body which had the pleasure of listening to Mr. Curtis had a characteristically playful interval two years previously, when the chair at its annual dinner was occupied by Mr. Charles S. Smith, the President

of the Chamber, beside whom sat as a guest Professor Goldwin Smith, of Canada. Towards the close of an enjoyable evening there were loud calls for an address from Mr. Samuel Sullivan Cox. As no regular toast had been assigned to him, Mr. Cox hesitated to respond, but at length he cheerfully yielded, and proceeded to entertain his friends after this style:

I have no particular toast to speak to, but in my emergency, I may select a subject fruitful to many a student, and especially as we are at the festive climax of our entertainment. In looking around this audience I feel like generalizing and in a nebulous way, therefore, allow me to select as a subject that of Smith (laughter). We have two representatives of the family here to-night. Both are near to me. And, if you will look in the New York Directory, you will find 2,000 other names, members of the same illustrious family. As a politician, not unused, "on the occasion sudden," to cultivating the graces, I will never utter a syllable against the Smith family (laughter). Why, in the early days of Grecian history, they were demigods and founders of states. The only place where they were not is recorded in Samuel—the chapter and verse I will not recall, for I am not certain about them. But it will not hurt you to search for the verse yourself from Genesis to Revelation (laughter). The words are: "There was no Smith in all Israel" (loud laughter). Whenever the children of Israel wanted to sharpen their spears or polish their ploughshares or cutlasses, or close up the rivets in their armor, they had to go down to Tyre and Sidon, and call in the Smiths of that locality (laughter). The Smiths have progressed and multiplied; they are everywhere—including Canada (laughter). The Registrar-General of Great Britain says that in England and Wales there are three-quarters of a million of Smiths. Oh, sir, it is a great family (laughter). In the early chronicles of Norseland, it is said, the Smiths were honored by being admitted to the royal presence. They drank mead with



the king. I never saw a Smith in my life that would ever refuse to take a drink (roars of laughter in which President Smith and Professor Goldwin Smith heartily joined). It mattered not what kind of liquor (laughter). But where the Smith family predominated in any country, liberty also triumphed—commercial, personal, and public liberty (cheers). The age of iron was the age of the Smith and the age of iron has always ruled (cheers).

That piece of rollicking banter may, perhaps, allow us to pair off the Smiths of Mr. Cox's fancy with the Washington Irving of Mr. Curtis's. If, however, something more is required on the humorous side to equalize the scales, there is no lack of material with which to bring the beam level. The apology of Mr. Joseph H. Choate, for instance, for not delivering a serious speech on the occasion of one of these annual dinners of the New York Chamber of Commerce might well be used in this connection. The toast which had been entrusted to him was couched in these words, "The Bench and Bar—blessed are the peacemakers," and it is little wonder that when the chairman announced the text from which Mr. Choate was to speak there was much laughter. By way of prelude Mr. Choate said:

I received this sentiment yesterday with an intimation that I was expected to respond to it. I had prepared a serious and sober essay on the relations of Commerce to the law—the one great relation of client and counsel (laughter)—but I have laid all that aside; I do not intend to have a single sober word to-night (laughter). I do not know that I could (laughter). There is a reason, however, why nothing more of a sober sort should be uttered at this table; there is a danger that it would increase, by however small a measure, the specific gravity of the Chamber of Commerce of New York. Certainly nothing could be a greater calamity than that (laughter). At an hour like

this, sir, merchants, like witnesses, are to be weighed as well as counted; and when I compare your appearance at this moment with what it was when you entered this room, when I look around upon these swollen girths and these expanded countenances, when I see that each individual of the Chamber has increased his *avoirdupois* at least ten pounds since he took his seat at this table, why, the total weight of the aggregate body must be startling indeed (laughter); and as I suppose you believe in a resurrection from this long session, as you undoubtedly hope to rise again from these chairs to which you have been glued so long, I should be the last person to add a feather's weight to what has been so heavily heaped upon you (laughter).

It is a worn-out truism by this time that the later agencies of modern enterprise have wonders standing to their credit which would transfix our forefathers with amazement. Human curiosity, as a rule, moves within narrow limits, and it has a tendency, therefore, to concentrate itself exclusively for the passing moment on a couple of the newest things in sensation. An attention, consequently, that is inclined to ignore everything nowadays which may be unconnected with Marconi's marvels, or submarine cruisers, or the involved mechanism of the latest air-ship, stands in need occasionally of being recalled to some of the other wonders I have indicated. May I not claim that the after-dinner speech of America is one of them? It has, as we have seen, transformed a Puritan celebration into a festival of merriment and brought it within the bounds of possibility to associate mirth with a Chamber of Commerce dinner. These, it must be conceded, are in themselves remarkable achievements. But its record does not end here. It can boast the further distinction of having lured into the sphere of its influence, and bent to its undespotic sway, the stolid

and phlegmatic Dutchman, who has now become, under its quickening fosterage, as frivolous as his most mercurial neighbor. The modern representatives of the Van Corlears, the Harden Broecks, and the Van Kortlandts, of whom old Diedrich Knickerbocker wrote so picturesquely and so affectionately, have fallen away sadly—and the fact cannot be screened—from the early habits of New Amsterdam. It may be remembered that our veracious old chronicler, lingering with reverence on the character of Governor Van Twiller as he administered the affairs of the infant settlement, tells us that “so invincible was his gravity that he was never known to laugh, or even to smile, through the whole course of a long and prosperous life”; and, speaking elsewhere of the Governor’s fellow-colonists, the historian assures us that “they were averse to the exercise of the tongue and the consequent exercise of the brains—certain it is that the most profound silence was maintained.” As applied to the descendants of Governor Van Twiller and his compatriots such language has become obsolete. Silence has given way to prolific speech and immobility of demeanor to the very abandonment of gaiety.

Perhaps President Roosevelt cannot be called in full support of this statement in view of his admission at a New England Society dinner in Brooklyn in December 1898:

The gentleman on my right [said Mr. Roosevelt] with the unmistakably Puritan name of McKelway, in the issue of the *Eagle* to-night alluded to me as a “Yankeeized Hollander.” I am a middling good Yankee. I always felt at these dinners of the New England Society, to which I come a trifle more readily than to any other like affairs, I and the president of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, who is also invariably in attendance, represent, as you would say, the victims

tied to the wheels of the Roman chariot of triumph. You see I am half Irish myself, and, as I told a New England Senator with whom I am intimate, when he remarked that the Dutch had been conquered by the New Englanders, “Well, the Irish have avenged us.”

Nevertheless, in spite of his Irish blood, the Dutchmen of New York claim President Roosevelt as their kinsman, and at the annual dinner of the Holland Society of that city, in January 1896, he was called on to respond to the toast of “The Hollander as an American.” The laughter and applause which greeted his opening remarks showed how completely the later Dutchman had cut himself adrift from the taciturnity of Governor Van Twiller’s day. The report of these remarks runs in this way:

I am more than touched, if you will permit me to begin rather seriously, by the way you have greeted me to-night. When I was in Washington, there was a story in reference to a certain President, who was not popular with some of his own people in a particular Western State. One of its Senators went to the White House and said he wanted a friend of his appointed postmaster of Topeka. The President’s private secretary said, “I am very sorry indeed, sir, but the President wants to appoint a personal friend.” Thereupon the Senator said, “Well, for God’s sake, if he has one friend in Kansas, let him appoint him” (great laughter). There have been periods during which the dissembled eulogies of the able press and my relations with about every politician of every party and every faction have made me feel I would like to know whether I had one friend in New York, and here I feel I have many (great applause).

In this art of the after-dinner speaker, the art of pointing what he may happen to be urging by a happy story, the present occupant of the Presidential chair has an enviable reputation. But it may be said that Mr.

Roosevelt gets his sense of humor from the Irish, and not from the Dutch side of his family. Even if it were so, it would not destroy the fact that the Dutchman in America is quite up to date both as an after-dinner orator and as one who can appreciate and relish a racy incursion into humor. At the dinner of the Holland Society, at which President Roosevelt spoke, the chair was occupied by a sound, orthodox Dutchman, Dr. D. B. St. John Roosa, who, in replying to a question of his own in his opening speech, "What are the Dutch?" answered: "Why, we are the salt of the earth! We do not pretend to be the bread, and butter, and cheese, but we are the salt." That the speech containing this question and answer was neither dull nor heavy, and that the company was anything but phlegmatic, is evidenced by the report, which is punctuated as many as twenty-one times by "laughter" and "great laughter." Again, the spirit of wild hilarity most certainly never sulked or lagged lazily behind when coaxed by Dr. de Witt Talmage at an American dinner-table and yet the doctor was able to give this account of himself at one of the celebrations of the Holland Society: "There is in my veins a strong tide of Dutch blood. My mother was a Van Nest, and I was baptized in a Dutch church and named after a Dutch dominie, graduated at a Dutch theological seminary, and was ordained by a Dutch minister, married a Dutch girl, preached thirteen years in a Dutch church, and always took a Dutch newspaper." That a man with such antecedents could deliver a speech crammed with laughter-provoking passages is conclusive proof, to my mind, that the American-Dutch temperament of to-day differs vastly from that pictured for us by our gracious old friend Diedrich Knickerbocker.

So universally has the fashion been

set in America in this matter of public dinners, so anxious is everybody to be in the fashion, and so exacting has the popular taste become in its demand for super-excellence in the consequential speeches, that quite as much tact and artifice of resource must be displayed in arranging the details of one of these functions as we find an aspiring social hostess giving on this side of the water to the engagements of the artistes for an ambitious "At home," or as the pushful promoters of some gorgeous bazaar employ in securing exalted patrons who are likely to prove efficient as decoys. In the first place the societies which indulge in an annual feast, with an extra one occasionally thrown in, are so numerous, and the rivalry between them is so keen, that the task of providing an attractive programme has grown to be a fine art. Every element in the Commonwealth which can associate a particle of sentiment with its existence, every group in which a mutual interest links together its constituent parts, seems to think it the correct thing to organize a society, or a club, and to eat a special yearly dinner. The names of all these festive bodies make up a formidable list. We have New England Societies, Holland Societies, Southern Societies, State Bar Associations, Sons of the Revolution, Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, Confederate Veteran Camps, St. Andrew's Societies, Papyrus Clubs, Lotos Clubs, Sunset Clubs, and, of course, Republican and Democratic Clubs without number. Infinite pains are taken by each of these to gather the cream of after-dinner oratory for its own special banquet. Ample time—a month, or even more—is given to consenting speakers, and in that period the orator is expected to learn his part and give it adequate rehearsal so that on the eventful night he may present his mosaic in light comedy with all the finish and ease of

an Edward Sothorn or a Sir Charles Wyndham. Equally nice attention is paid to the texts of the toasts to be proposed. These are polished with something like the fine skill with which the lapidary cuts his diamonds, and the nearer the polished texts can be made to approach an epigram the more they are prized. As these toasts may number over a dozen for the one occasion, and as the eloquence they evoke is prolonged, as a rule, much beyond the midnight hour, they are generally found to formulate some airy abstract sentiment or proposition which in its nature is suggestive of crispness in reply. Here are specimens of the texts which supply the motive for many of the speeches of which I am writing: "The Press—right or wrong: when right, to be kept right; when wrong, to be set right"; "Truth and Trade: those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder"; "The Responsibility of having Ancestors"; "The Debt each part of the Country owes to the Other"; "Unsolved Problems"; "The Oldest Inhabitant—the Weather of New England," the last toast being responded to in characteristic fashion at a New England Society dinner by Mark Twain.

The marvel is that where so many dinners are eaten and so many speeches delivered there is such an absence of staleness and sameness. The explanation, however, lies in the fact that good stories thrown forward, with accurate judgment, as light skirmishers are usually able to carry back with them the palm of victory. But these skirmishers must have none of the stiffness of veterans. It would, of course, mean ruin to the reputation of an after-dinner orator if he ventured in any company to palm off, as fresh to the ranks, the seasoned anecdote which had already borne the brunt of active service. Knowing this, the man who has a toast entrusted to him is careful to

pay reasonable regard to the necessity of only calling stories to his aid which bear the appearance of being new, and so long as he takes this precaution he is certain to get the credit of originality. There are a few exemptions from this rule. Being carefully labelled as neutral ground, satire, for instance, at the expense of the politician, is an evergreen quantity at these dinner-tables. Like the figure of Aunt Sally on a fair green, he is there for anybody to take a cheap shot at him. One gentleman spoke of an electoral campaign, which had just closed, as covering a time "when politicians were husbanding truth with their wonted frugality and dispensing fiction with their habitual lavishness." In another case a public man was congratulated on his advocacy of a certain policy which, unlike other policies, presumably, "has as its essence the conduct of public affairs on the basis of the decalogue." At a third dinner a gentleman, giving his playful estimate of some American politicians, told the story of one of them who went out for a long swim. "All at once a shark, a man-eater, was coming the other way, and swam up squarely in front of him. They eyed each other for a moment, and then the shark—blushed and sped away." The proverbial jealousy between many of the American cities is a further topic that may be perennially used without risk if it is treated in such a way as to gratify the local vanity. It was, of course, a New England Society orator who said that if a hard fate had not compelled the New Yorkers to be stock-dealers and millionaires at the same time, they might, amongst other things, have been "manipulating their shares, with the aid of plough-handles, watering their stock at the nearest brook, and might have been on speaking terms with the Ten Commandments, and have indulged a hope of some day going to

heaven, and—possibly to Boston." It was the theory of a New Englander, that when Chicago was destroyed by fire the people of that town were saved from any considerable loss by heavy insurances which had been effected in New England.

I chanced to be in Chicago [said this gentleman at a dinner board to a company of fellow New Englanders] two or three days after the great fire of 1871. As I walked among the smoking ruins, if I saw a man with a cheerful air, I knew that he was a resident of Chicago; if I saw a man with a long face, I knew that he represented a Hartford Insurance Company. Really the cheerful resignation with which the Chicago people endured the losses of New England did honor to human nature (laughter).

We have it on the authority of a brilliant master of the art of after-dinner speaking that platitudes are essential adjuncts to the construction of a speech, and, that being so, repetition, more or less, can scarcely be avoided. James Russell Lowell once enumerated what he called "the ingredients of after-dinner oratory." "They are," he said, "the joke, the quotation, and the platitude; and the successful platitude, in my judgment, requires a very high order of genius." On the same occasion Lowell remarked: "I must say that I am one of those who feel the difficulties of after-dinner oratory more keenly the more after-dinner speeches I make." "There is but one pleasure in life," said Charles Dudley Warner, the author of *My Summer in a Garden*, "equal to that of being called on to make an after-dinner speech, and that is not being called on." A happy illustration of the different feelings that must be experienced by the man who has to make one of these speeches and those who have only to listen was given by Marion J. Verdery at an annual banquet of the Southern Society

of New York, over which Mr. John C. Calhoun presided. At the outset of his speech, in replying to the toast of "The South in Wall Street," Mr. Verdery said:

Two old darkies, lounging on a street corner in Richmond, Virginia, one day were suddenly aroused by a runaway team that came dashing towards them at break-neck speed. The driver, scared nearly to death, had abandoned his reins and was awkwardly climbing out of the wagon at the rear end. One of the old negroes said, "Brer' Johnson, sure as you born man, de runaway horse am powerful gran' and a monstrous fine sight to see." Johnson shook his head doubtfully and then replied philosophically, "Dat 'penda berry much, nigger, on whedder you be standin' on de corner obsarvin' of him or be gettin' ober de tail-board ob de waggin'." And likewise it strikes me that any keen enjoyment to be gotten out of after-dinner speaking is peculiarly contingent—"pendin' berry much on whedder you is standin' off lookin' on, or gittin' ober de tail-board of de waggin'."

In reality, however, the risky experiment of "climbin' ober de tail-board" does not seem to carry many terrors with it. Notwithstanding the responsibility of the position, the anxiety of preparation, and the worry it must cause to search successfully for the new joke and the apposite quotation, and to awaken the necessary amount of genius which is required to invest the platitude with proper pomp and circumstance, it would appear that most Americans take the same view of an invitation to respond to a toast as that taken by ex-Senator Edward Oliver Wolcott, of Colorado, when he was asked to speak at a New England Society banquet in New York.

It was with great diffidence [said Mr. Wolcott on the night of the dinner] that I accepted the invitation of your President to respond to a toast to-



night. I realized my incapacity to do justice to the occasion, while at the same time I recognized the high compliment conveyed. I felt somewhat as the man did respecting the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy; he said "he didn't know whether Lord Bacon wrote Shakespeare's works or not, but if he didn't he missed the greatest opportunity of his life." As a rule, when a man is paid the compliment of being requested to reply to a toast at one of these dinners, he is immediately seized with a desire to "write Shakespeare."

The fashion set by bodies of such high social standing as the New England Societies, the Sons of the Revolution, and the Southern Society, is faithfully imitated by every organization of lesser note. They all produce their after-dinner orators. And the budding, undeveloped Mark Twains, and Chauncey Depews, and Joseph Choates are not left to grope blindly in the dark after any undisciplined gift of eloquence which they may happen to possess. As in Great Britain there are innumerable guide-books to the Civil Service and the legal profession, so in America there are many varieties of primers and expositors, all of them explaining most elaborately the accurate method of proposing and responding to a toast. It is not given to everybody, of course, to achieve a brilliant reputation. Some of the young aspirants turn out to be, if not mute, at all events, inglorious Miltons. Of many of them it might be said, as Sheridan observed of Lord Lauderdale—a joke in his hands is no laughing matter. But when the harvest has been threshed and the chaff winnowed from the grain we find a rich asset in material left behind to provide healthy and enjoyable intellectual fare for the American people. The elements of vitality being as distinctly active in a good comedy as they are in a serious melodrama, it is in no way remarkable that

of the better class of after-dinner speeches a great number have taken their places in the permanent literature of the country. The choicest position in the leading pages of the foremost American newspapers is at all times open to the latest achievement of those who are regarded as "old Parliamentary hands" in the domain of post-prandial eloquence, and it is only recently that the New York dailies gave their columns up cheerfully to a detailed record of one continued course of light and pleasant fooling which followed a dinner given at the Metropolitan Club by Colonel George Harvey, president of Harper Brothers, to Mark Twain on the occasion of the sixty-seventh birthday of the American humorist. No orator who has caught the ear of the American public by his brilliancy at the festive board or on the lecture platform dreams of issuing his addresses in book form without including his best after-dinner speeches, while in a superb work entitled *Modern Eloquence*, published some little time ago in ten volumes by Messrs. John D. Morris & Co., of Philadelphia, no less than three of the largest volumes are devoted to the bright things that have been said in honoring the diverse sentiments which have ornamented the toast-lists of banquets held in Delmonico's and elsewhere. The conviction may be allowed that in a country where life is driven at the highest pressure, where trusts, and "rings," and "corners" must do anything but conduce to mental tranquillity, where the fear of any encroachment on the Monroe doctrine must be perpetually "getting on" people's nerves, it is well that the after-dinner speech has assumed the proportions of a national possession. So long as it manages to hold its own in that position the gaiety of the nation can never be altogether eclipsed.



## THE FALCON OF THE FONTARINI.

### I.

The splendid, silent room framed him like a portrait as he came forward, moving with the grace of a courtier or a woman, a figure all scarlet velvet and white fur, with here and there a glimpse of gold, or the swift shimmer of a jewel which caught the light. His scarlet cap, with its white, curving feather, hung from one delicate hand; about his neck was a broad gold chain, with a pendant curiously worked in gold and rubies,—a mulberry-tree, the favorite emblem of his master, the Duke of Milan. The old Cardinal-Bishop, looking up from the richly-bound breviary before him, stared for a moment, as though dazzled. This, then, was the Duke's envoy, this young, slight man, with his keen face, his half-shut eyes, his splendor of dress, his courteous insolence of manner. He stood bowing, cap in hand; but in his eyes the Cardinal read a challenge. He did not understand its meaning, for he had never seen the man before.

He rose, a lean, majestic figure, and held out his hand. The Envoy, touching the ground with one knee, kissed the great amethyst in the old man's ring. Then, smiling superbly, he drew himself up. "His Eminence the Cardinal-Bishop?" he asked softly.

The Cardinal bent his head once more. "The same, at your service, Messer Maledetto. I have the honor of entertaining the Envoy of the most illustrious Duke of Milan?"

"The honor is mine, Eminence. It is one which I have long desired, to meet face to face a man who bears the great name of Fontarini." Was it irony which barbed the smooth tones? The Cardinal moved uneasily, motioned his

visitor to a seat, and himself sat down again, shutting his breviary as he did so. The Envoy's keen glance fell on the closed book. "Ah, what a holy occupation, Eminence," he said, in his soft, jarring voice. "What a spot for meditation!"

Again the Cardinal shot a sharp glance at the inscrutably smiling face before him. Was it irony, or impertinence? And yet the man was in the right. Through the long window immediately in front of the old man's seat one could see, as in a picture, the marvellous outline of the castle of Florola, perched on its high plateau above the little town. In the evening light, the late sunshine which comes just before sunset and turns all things to gold, the solid masonry of the great keep stood out against the pale sky, majestic and immovable as the mountains beyond it. On the tower, a sudden splash of color against the gray and brown of brick and stone, the banner of the Duke of Florola stretched itself to a cool air from the hills,—the scarlet banner with the white falcon of the Fontarini soaring proudly among its gorgeous folds.

The Cardinal, with his eyes lifted to the tower, forgot the odd mockery in the stranger's tone. A light, half proud, half tender, showed in his worn face. "The Falcon of the Fontarini," he murmured to himself.

The Envoy heard him. His eyes, too, were fastened upon the banner, with a look impossible to read. "Yes," he said softly, "the Falcon of the Fontarini, the White Falcon, upon which no black feather ever showed,—or so they say."

Swift as thought the Cardinal had turned upon him. "They say?" he asked. "Do you not believe it, then?"

The Envoy shrugged his shoulders slightly under their splendid covering of scarlet and white. "Why should I doubt, Eminence?" he said. "You see I wear your colors. I only spoke by hearsay. Men talk of the White Falcon where I live. It is a symbol, they say, an emblem of pride never stained by any shame, faith never marred by any treachery. The women of the Fontarini are above suspicion; the men are paladins of loyalty and honor. So they say."

Again there was that ring of unutterable bitterness in the smooth, mocking voice. The Cardinal's pale old face flushed like a boy's. "Who are you," he stammered, "who dare to throw doubt upon our honor?"

The Envoy's eyes met his fairly. He paused for a moment ere he replied. "I am Ugo Maledetto, envoy of His Highness the Duke of Milan," he said. "Nothing more, Eminence; nothing on earth more,—grace to the Falcon of the Fontarini."

The Cardinal had begun to tremble. He sank back in his chair, gripping the carved arms with shaking fingers. In the dimness of the room his face was ashen. "If I were a younger man, I would kill you," he said. For a moment there was silence. The young man sat smoothing the white plume in his cap; the Cardinal waited, a great fear in his heart. "Who are you?" he asked at last.

The Envoy laughed. "When I entered this room, Eminence," he said, "I did not know,—nor did you. Now I know. There is a mirror on the wall beside you. Look in it, and tell me who I am."

The Cardinal did not look. He stared at his visitor's face instead. "It is impossible," he said.

The Envoy smoothed his white feather more carefully than before. Presently he began to speak, in the quiet, monotonous tone of one who

prepares to tell a story. "Listen, Eminence," he said. "There was a great house once in which men held the repute of their honor above all things; and in it there were two brothers, and a woman, of their own kin, betrothed to one of them. But both loved her,—and one was a priest." The Cardinal gave a swift shiver, and then sat very still. Maledetto went on. "Both loved her; and it was the priest whom she loved; a great sin, Eminence, and one to be paid for dearly, as you shall see. There was a scandal,—a scandal in the house which held honor so highly; but no one suspected the priest. The lady's betrothed suspected a page,—a foolish, rainbow-coated, lute-tinkling youth. He found him near her window one night, half-killed him, and sent him about his business. The rest was patched up, for the honor of the house. The lady took the veil; the priest became, in due course, a cardinal,—a cardinal famed for his virtues. The other brother died head of his house."

There was silence. Then the Cardinal spoke. "Is that all?"

Maledetto smiled oddly. "Not quite, Eminence. There was a child,—to attest the honor of the house. An awkward legacy, Eminence! They might have strangled it, at least, but they had less mercy. The child was smuggled to Milan. It grew up among thieves and cut-throats; it found refuge in a convent, and learned the ways of priests; it lied and stole and stabbed before it was twenty. It found service with a great man, and came to fortune; but it remembered the ways by which it had come." His tone was so sinister that the Cardinal raised his bowed head. "It is here," Maledetto said quietly.

The Cardinal stretched out his hands with a swift, appealing gesture. "What do you want?"

Maledetto laughed. "What I shall

take, Eminence. See here,—to save your honor, the honor of your house, you sent your own flesh and blood into beggary, you plunged a child's soul into infamy unspeakable, you denied your son. You sent me into hell,—to keep your White Falcon clean! Well, I have come to ask for justice, for reparation; and I shall have it."

"Gold?" muttered the Cardinal.

The Envoy shook his head. "I have stabbed a man in the back, and betrayed a woman, for gold. You offer it too late, Eminence. No,—I will have vengeance. I come as the envoy of the Duke of Milan to his ally of Fiorola, who has broken treaty with him."

The Cardinal started up. "It is a lie!"

"I have the papers, Eminence. I hold the honor of the Fontarini in the hollow of my hand. But I will respect it,—on one condition. The first thing that I ask for in Fiorola shall be mine, be it what it may. One thing out of all your wealth you shall give me, Eminence,—you and your house, who owe me justice. Will you agree, to save the White Falcon of the Fontarini?"

"What is the thing you ask?"

An evil smile flickered in Maledetto's eyes. "When I have seen your wealth, I will choose, Eminence. But remember,—I have full power from the Duke. A word, and Sanseverino's army will surround Fiorola; another word, and your house is shamed before all the world."

He went out softly, an ominous scarlet figure in the gloom; and the Cardinal sat where he had left him, gazing with wide-open eyes at the banner on the tower above him.

## II.

An hour later a splendid train clanked and jangled up the hill to the castle of Fiorola. Cardinal Fon-

tarini, on his white mule, rode silent and cowed at Maledetto's side. He cast now and then a frightened glance at the scarlet and white figure, with its sinister, unmoved face, its keen eyes fixed eagerly on the tower which hung above them beyond the rough windings of the mountain road. It seemed to the old man as though the doom of the great house of Fontarini rode there at his side, serene in white and scarlet bravery, a-glitter with jewels which had been won Heaven alone could tell by what terrible deeds. "I have stabbed a man in the back, and betrayed a woman for gold," he had said; and the words, and all the degradation they implied, would not be banished from the Cardinal's ear and mind. He had murdered and betrayed—for gold; and he was a Fontarini.

The old man's eyes involuntarily sought the white bird on the banner which floated above. Was there no mark on those stainless feathers? Were they still as they had been when he last looked at them? A Fontarini had done such things, and lived to tell the tale,—nay, to boast, with bitter irony, of his deed. The Cardinal's head sank lower and lower on his breast, and he muttered an uneasy prayer as he rode. Let the Saints keep the honor of Fontarini, he cried in his own heart. He himself had tried to hide the stain which his sin had brought upon the falcon flag; and lo, here the dishonor of his house rode at his side, a vivid figure laden with disaster, and inspired by deadly hatred and scorn for the great race which had given him birth, and disowned him.

"A mighty fortress, Eminence," he heard Maledetto's smooth voice say in his ear, as they turned the last corner and came upon the castle, lying huge and gray upon its plateau, like an old lion asleep.

"May Heaven defend it!" the Car-

dinal murmured swiftly, and crossed himself to seal the prayer.

Maledetto smiled suddenly, a smile not pleasant to see. "You have done your best, Eminence," he said. "Now let us see what Heaven means to do without your help. It seems to me that on one occasion you helped,—Heaven—too well."

Even as he spoke they rode in under the great archway to the courtyard where the Duke of Fiorola waited to greet the envoy of Lodovico Sforza. He was younger than Maledetto, slighter, more boyish, a personality less mature, both for evil and for good. All the bravery of his dress did not set him off as Maledetto was set off by his white and scarlet; all his jewels failed to lend him the same effect of splendor. He moved a little stooping, as though his state weighed heavily upon his narrow shoulders. His greeting had not the princely courtesy which showed in Maledetto's reply. The Cardinal, watching the two men, was moved to an unwilling admiration by Maledetto's supreme grace of bearing and speech.

The tedious courtesies were ended at last. Wine had been offered and accepted, a mere passing refreshment before the solid banquet of the evening. The Duke led his guest through halls and galleries, pointing out, with a halting tongue and hesitating finger, the ancient glories of Fiorola. Maledetto was full of praises, and capped his host's sparse phrases with generous appreciation of all he saw. But in his heart he was saying, as the Cardinal well knew, that the splendors of Fiorola only deepened his own wrong. He might have pardoned being exiled from a hovel; but exile from this palace he would never forgive. He remembered horrible alleys in Milan, days of hunger and cold and despair; he thought of the rags which had covered his own body, and contrasted

them with the rich livery of the stammering young man at his side, whose only claim to greatness lay in the fact that he had been born heir to the dukedom of Fiorola. Would this tongue-tied youth have known how to carve his fortunes as he, Maledetto, had done, if he too had been thrust out from all shelter of roof or name into the gutters of Milan? And had Maledetto owned a great name, to what heights might he not have attained, instead of being doomed to serve another man?

The Cardinal read his enemy's thoughts as they went. A strange fear clutched all the time at his heart, an inexplicable dread of what a moment might bring forth. His dread took shape at last before the portrait of a girl with red-brown hair, upon which Maledetto's eyes fixed themselves with a curious intentness, and before which he seemed inclined to halt for explanations. The Cardinal hurried the procession past the picture in safety, with nothing said. Soon afterwards he found an opportunity to whisper in the Duke's ear a command before which the young man's jaw dropped stupidly. Even in the act, he caught Maledetto's questioning glance, and trembled.

He trembled still more when, on sitting down to the state banquet, he marked Maledetto's keen eyes roam to the empty place in which the Duchess of Fiorola should have sat at her lord's side,—the young Duchess of a few weeks only, the girl whose beauty half Italy knew by heart. Did he too know it, the Cardinal wondered? Was that why he came as Duke Lodovico's envoy to Fiorola?

The Duke saw the glance and answered it in his blundering way. "Our Lady Duchess is sick, Messer Maledetto," he said, "or she had not missed the joy of greeting you."

Maledetto's eyes dropped modestly from the Duke's face. "I will hope to

claim her greeting another day, my Lord Duke," he said.

III.

It was morning. The Duke, whose brain was not fitted for diplomacy, was closeted with his horse-breaker. In a cool, dark chamber, over-looking a small rose-garden, Maledetto and the Cardinal sat in close but admirably courteous conflict. The treaty was broken,—there was no doubt of that. For once the old man's cunning had overreached itself. He had planned greater glory, greater wealth, for the Fontarini, and he had delivered himself into the hands of the Duke of Milan and his envoy. Maledetto was calm, even agreeable; it pleased him to see the old man's wrath and shame. He smiled now and then as the discussion proceeded, and trifled with a rose which he had taken from a bowl on the table at which they sat. The silky, scented thing full of the bloom and perfume of summer, seemed to set his thoughts straying in pleasant paths. He hummed the refrain of a love-song by Niccolo da Correggio as they battled over the broken treaty.

At last the Cardinal, fairly beaten in all his arguments, sat back, white and silent, in his chair. Maledetto, with the rose held lightly against his lips, watched him with a malicious smile. "Take heart, Eminence," he said ironically; "there is still our compact. Give me my pay, and I will leave you in peace; one thing out of all the wealth and splendor of the Fontarini,—surely, it is a cheap price to pay! Think,—I have but to speak the word, and Sanseverino has your fine castle in his clutch. Where will the Fontarini be then? One thing out of all your wealth,—oh, it is more than worth the price!"

The Cardinal's head was sunk upon his breast. Something in the tone of

Lodovico Sforza's envoy made him look up sharply. "One thing?" he repeated. "What is it, Messer Maledetto,—this trifle for which you will sell your vengeance?"

Maledetto, smiling still, pointed through the window with the rose in his hand. "You see it yonder, Eminence," he said.

The old man half raised himself in his chair, and then sank back, with a dreadful, livid face. Beyond the window, in the rose garden, the young Duchess of Florola sunned herself in the glow and splendor of the summer morning. Her white robe shone angelically in the young light, a cap bound with pearls crowned her red curls like an aureole, her face, turned towards the two men whom she could not see, wore a half expectant smile. Perhaps the murmur of their talk reached her where she stood, with a rose, the fellow to that which Maledetto held, poised lightly between her fingers. The Cardinal's eyes turned slowly from the unconscious girl below to Maledetto's face, with its superbly insolent smile. "Dog,—beast!" he gasped.

Maledetto bent his head pleasantly. "I am sorry you do not like your own work, Eminence," he said. "Such as I am, you have made me. Is it courteous to hurl hard words at me? Dog, beast? Am I not, rather,—your son, most holy Father?"

The Cardinal shrank in his chair. "The Saints forgive me!" he muttered, through locked teeth.

Maledetto waved the rose to and fro with an airy gesture of assurance. "They will, they will, without doubt," he said; "but you must first do penance,—for my sins. For every unfair blow I have struck on my way to the estate of which you deprived me, you shall pay with a blow at your own pride, your own honor. For every tear I shed as a child you shall shed a



hundred in your old age,—tears of blood and shame. For the sake of the white bird there on your tower you disowned me, your son. I tell you I will dye the Falcon of the Fontarini black as any crow, for all the world to see.”

The Cardinal sat speechless. A kind of savage beauty showed in the Envoy's face. It was as though Vengeance incarnate sat there before him. —Vengeance, smiling yet terrible, holding a rose, and breathing dishonor and death.

“You denied me your name,” Maledetto went on. “You sent me into the world nameless. To-day I will take my revenge. Keep your castle, if you like; I will drag the name of Fontarini through the gutters of Milan.”

Again the Cardinal half rose. “Send for Sanseverino, and do your worst. The Duchess at least shall escape you.”

Maledetto's lifted eyebrows silenced him. “Escape a victorious army,—a girl like that?” He laughed softly, and licked his thin lips after the laugh. “Few things escape a victorious army. Eminence, and the Duchess will not be one of them. Will it not be better to make terms with me? A litter shall wait outside the gates; it shall seem that she went of her own accord. You shall take your dishonor honorably; I will not say you sold her to me to save Fiorola. I will give her a palace in Milan, and jewels such as even the

*Macmillan's Magazine.*

Duke cannot match. Think well, Eminence, ere you refuse.”

The old man did not answer. He sat lost in dreadful perplexity. In the garden below, the red-haired girl sang to herself in the sun. Maledetto, his keen face bent forward, watched her through narrowed eyes, as a cat watches the bird he means to spring upon. Her grace, the warm tint of her hair, the swing of her white robe, stirred in him a pleasure more exquisite even than revenge. It was sweet to be in the position to exact such vengeance; but the beauty of the victim lent a zest to the sacrifice. It was as though he held in his hand the very flower of the race he hated, as he held the rose, to dash to pieces at his will.

Even as the thought came to him, the rose between his fingers dropped shattered upon the table, and the Cardinal looked up. His face was drawn and haggard, and he seemed suddenly to have grown very old. “You have us at your mercy,” he said. “I cannot see Fiorola pass to another race,—better anything than that! Have the litter at the gate,—I will lure her there on some errand,—there will be a new moon to-night.”

He rose and went out feebly, leaving Maledetto smiling at the shattered rose on the table before him, and the girl who still sang to herself unconsciously in the sunshine without.

*Nellie K. Blissett.*

*(To be concluded.)*

## MOUNTAINEERING OF TO-DAY.

The love of high places is so old a passion in human nature that we are surprised when some fact brings sharply home to us the very recent origin of the mountaineer's specific delights. Many since the Hebrew poet have

looked to the hills for their aid, but till a century ago few went into the hills to find it. Our modern knowledge is an intimate knowledge, to which the great heights are not mere figures of rhetoric or abstract types of sav-

agery, but dwelling-grounds curiously explored in their most secret moods. We, too, have our transcendentalists who sing their hymns before sunrise at Chamonix and other places, and make an esoteric cult out of the "secrets of the snows." Mr. Ruskin has written an eloquent confession of faith, and last year Sir Martin Conway, a practical mountaineer if ever one lived, gave us a subtle and fascinating *apologia* of the craft. On this occasion we will follow the great Lord Lovat's example, and not "presume to dispute on metaphysics." There is an ecstasy in mountaineering as in all nobler sports, and the dullest soul, if indeed dulness can ever be predicated of the true climber, will find a strange sub-conscious self awoken on the rock-buttress or the last saddle of snow. If a poet died young in us all, he must be held to come to life when the kingdoms of the world are spread out beneath us on some lonely summit. Let us recognize the mood and reverence it; let us call it if we please, in the words of a modern book, the "communing between that homing creeping part of us which loves vineyards and dances and a slow movement among pastures, and that other part which is only properly at home in heaven." But for the present we are concerned with humbler walks. In face of the present condition of the sport it is worth while to inquire what pleasures we seek from it, and how and where we are likely to get them. For the Elizabethan age of mountaineering has gone, and if we would be preserved from Jacobean decadence we must hold fast to the great tradition and disdain to bow our knee to the second-rate.

No man is a true mountaineer unless he have ingrained in his nature the love of mountains. This may be a truism, but it is very commonly forgotten. For the athlete who will spend

days on an *aiguille* for the sake of gymnastics has less of the true stuff in him than the simple fellow who goes a walking tour in Devonshire from an honest liking for high places. To get somewhere up into the clouds, to see the plains beneath him, to breathe the keen upland air and enter for a little into the solemn quiet world of the hills, is the first aim of the mountaineer. From this foundation start degrees of excellence. For the second endowment is the impulse to contend with wild nature, to pit the skill and courage of man against cold and storms and great distances. Hence comes the variation in the brotherhood according to each man's bodily and spiritual hardihood, imagination, and ambition. The masters of the craft desire to go where no human foot has ever gone before, while the humble follower is content with a relative savagery. The leaders have the lust of pioneering and discovery, the desire to break from the beaten track, and owe none of their achievements to the work of predecessors. The ordinary man is content with the fact that the ascent is new to *him*, and comforts himself by taking things as they are and making no comparisons. Imagination may widen horizons, but it is apt to drive satisfaction far afield.

The Alps in the early 'Sixties were a perfect hunting-ground for the mountaineer, and the men who conquered them were worthy of their good fortune. The tourist had not penetrated to the high valleys; there were no starting hotels perched on the knees of the peaks; most of the mountains were unascended, and not a few reputed inaccessible. Mountaineering had not become a science, and at a deadly risk to life and limb the pioneers had to find out methods for themselves. Slow diligences took the climber to the foot of the valleys, and then there were

weary travels on foot to rough little inns where the inhabitants had possibly never before set eyes on an Englishman. Most of the great pathfinders—Tyndall, Kennedy, Mr. Whymper, Sir Alfred Wills, Sir Leslie Stephen—were fully as good as the guides who accompanied them; and they had, further, the exquisite pleasure of presiding at the foundation of a school of guides whose names are now famous wherever mountaineers assemble. Most of them, too, were men of high ability, who attained distinction in many walks of life, so that the Alps formed for a decade the playground of as fine a coterie of true sportsmen as ever adorned any sport. The risks they ran seem to us to-day abnormal and unnecessary—but all pioneering is dangerous, and it is only by degrees that habits of caution become part of the etiquette of a game. Professor Tyndall once went from the Riffel to the top of Monte Rosa and back within nine hours, alone, without a rope, and with no provision save a ham sandwich and a small flask of tea. Mr. Whymper's solitary scrambles on the Breuil side of the Matterhorn are another example of a risk which would nowadays be ruled outside the proper category of mountaineering perils. But with all its drawbacks of discomfort and danger, there can never be such a time again, never such a virgin field for skill and courage within a fair distance of home, never such a race of guides who were learning side by side with their masters the principles of their art. The great era began with Sir Alfred Wills' ascent of the Wetterhorn, and the rapid conquest of the chief Oberland heights. In 1858 Mr. Llewellyn Davies ascended the Dom, and three years later Professor Tyndall reached the summit of the Weisshorn, its superb sister-peak. The following year the Dent Blanche, perhaps the finest piece of rock- and snow-work in

the Alps, fell to Mr. Kennedy; and in 1864 Sir Leslie Stephen conquered the Zinal Rothorn, and Mr. Whymper the Points des Ecrins in Dauphiny and the Aiguille Verte, the first to be surmounted of the great Chamonix aiguilles. In 1865 mountaineering reached its most sensational pitch in Mr. Whymper's ascent of the Matterhorn, and the story of the tragedy which followed first opened the eyes of the world to the difficulties and excitements of the sport. With the ascent of the Meije, the last of the great untrodden peaks, in 1877, the heroic age may be said to have closed.

Ten years later the Alps were a popular resort; hotels had arisen and a large staff of guides; a recognized route had been created to all the greater summits. New and easier ways were discovered, difficult rocks were adorned with stanchions and wire hawsers, and it became possible for any man, sound in wind and head, to ascend peaks which were beforetimes the perquisite of the hard-bitten mountaineer. True pioneering had gone, and those who had the craze for exploration were compelled to adopt the cult of the "wrong way" and climb cliffs out of the track, which an earlier generation had preferred to avoid. The rock pinnacles of Chamonix became the fashionable playground, until someone discovered the odd limestone crags of the Dolomites, and fashion turned eastward. But those fields in turn were exhausted, the "wrong way" became a right way, and a recognized alternative route. A very few teeth and notches remained unascended, but in July 1904 almost the last of these, the little rock pinnacle called the Gabelhorn, in the Vispthal east of St. Nicholas, was conquered after immense difficulty by a party of three. It had been assaulted for years with rockets and every known contrivance, which shows the pass to which the explorer

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is brought in his search for new worlds to conquer.

The truth is that the Alps have become too familiar to us nowadays. There are valleys, of course, where the voice of the tourist is never heard, but the great climbing centres during the climbing months are as populous as Margate. Vulgarization has followed, and though nothing can detract from the beauty of the great snow-fields and the lonelier summits, the lower slopes have suffered a sad change from their old mountain peace. Picnic parties are everywhere, strings of townsfolk under indifferent guides make a daily procession over the lower glaciers, and at every turn in the path stands Somebody's Refreshment Rooms, with advertisements in three languages. Small wonder that the "Alpinist" has become the comic man of Continental papers. He who would enjoy the Alpine valleys must go there in early spring or late autumn, and at these seasons he will find the mountains shut to him. In some degrees the peaks have suffered also, not from vulgarization so much as from a too intimate knowledge. To climb a first-class peak is now only a matter of fine weather and competent guides, and in consequence climbers are not the select fraternity they once were. There are too many loquacious Tartarins abroad without the engaging ways of the man of Tarascon. But the most serious fact is simply the excess of knowledge. Every reasonable path to a summit has been explored and chronicled, and in the true sphere of pioneering nothing remains to be done. We should be the last to underrate the value of many of the ascents from the strict mountaineering point of view. Some, such as the Zinal Rothhorn, will always be difficult; others, like the Dent Blanche, the Saas route on the Dom, and under many conditions the Matterhorn, will always retain an element of danger.

The Alps are the finest training-ground both in snow- and rock-work in the world, an apprenticeship which every climber must serve. They are also the alphabet of mountaineering. The results of all exploration in the Himalaya or the Andes are expressed in terms of them. But for mountaineering in the highest sense, when man is striving literally with the unknown, their earlier value has in the main departed. There are still plenty of routes of extreme danger and difficulty. Any one with a fancy for self-destruction can attempt if he please "Carrel's Traverse" on the Matterhorn, which has only once been achieved since the intrepid Jean Antoine crossed it as part of the day's work. Places on the Schreckhorn, the Dru, the Meije, and a score of others will accommodate any foolhardy person who likes gambling with death with the odds greatly against him. But mountaineering, if it is to be a sport and not a folly, must continue on rational lines, and such expedients do not meet the difficulty. Not even that most interesting and enlightening practice, climbing without guides, will solve it. The question for the climber is how to find a playground where he can use his mountain-craft, and his mountain-craft alone, to discover the way to a summit; and he finds his answer either in mountaineering beyond the Alps or in rock-climbing in its most modern development.

Mountaineering out of Europe is, in the first instance, mountain travel. So also was it in the early days in the Alps, when the climber had to equip himself as for a serious expedition and in most districts was literally a pathfinder. When he discovered a pass he did not know into what valley he was to descend, and the snow pinnacles which showed at turns of the road had yet to be named and mapped. But

travel in mountains beyond Europe, if it is less rich in historic interest, has one charm denied to the Alps,—it is concerned with more immense heights and wilder solitudes. It may be true that from an æsthetic point of view the two finest things in the world are the white Himalaya and the black Coolin, though the one is only a ninth of the other's height, but to the proper mountaineering eye mere quantity must count for a great deal. If you have to contend with Nature, there is an exhilaration to be got from the reflection that you are meeting her in her most pitiless mood. And there is also a magic and a mystery in immense heights which cannot be measured by mere altitude. To the eye of fancy "Himalay" out-soars "Mount Chimborazo" (we correct the inaccuracies of the original) by far more than five or six thousand feet. Hence the interest of far-away mountaineering is chiefly centred on the giants of Northern India and South America, and on ranges like those of Equatorial Africa, which make a peculiar appeal to the imagination. Canada, indeed, has in her Selkirk and Cascade ranges hundreds of miles of virgin exploration ground at a reasonable height; and that mighty cone of ice, Mount St. Elias, rising from a plain of snow on the brink of tempestuous seas, is as romantic and unfriendly as the Hyperborean hell to which Norse legend condemned the sinner. The Caucasus too, which is relatively at our doors, is a field which will not be exhausted in our generation, and contains both snow-fields and cliffs of a magnificence scarcely to be equalled. Mr. Freshfield's narrative of his expeditions will convince any mountaineer that in the Caucasus he will find all the interest of mountain travel combined with climbing of the first order. But the imagination, which is not amenable to reason, returns to the great ranges we have

named. Of the three, the Andes is the least attractive. Much of it is quite unknown, little has been fully explored, and the difficulties of approach are perhaps greater than anywhere else in the world. But there are none of the minor beauties which set off the heights. No vineyards or rose gardens creeping under the knees of the hills, and by their soft humanities casting into relief the desolation above. The summits rise from stony tablelands, and in themselves have neither the contour nor surface for interesting climbs. Aconcagua is perhaps the highest point in the world of which the ascent is unquestioned, but it is literally a walk, though an exceedingly hazardous and toilsome one. So with the volcanoes of Equador—Chimborazo and Cotopaxi—of which Mr. Whymper's account is enough to deter the most ardent traveller. Their one charm is that they are mainly unexplored, and beyond doubt they and the Bolivian and Peruvian Andes furnish as hard a task as the most resolute pioneer could desire.

The Himalaya, or rather the whole mountain-system from Afghanistan to Assam, must always be the perfection of the mountaineer's ideal. Nowhere else is the scale so gigantic; nowhere else do ice-peaks tower over temperate mountain-glens, pine-clad slopes, and thickets of rhododendrons, which sink in turn into rich tropical plains. Their configuration, too, is as varied as it is lovely. The photographs of Signor Sella, who accompanied Mr. Freshfield in his recent journey round Kangchenjunga, reveal a wonderland of mountain beauty. The exquisite lace-like crest of Siniolchum, the tower of Jannu, black and sheer like a more glorious Matterhorn, or some such panorama as that from Chunjerma, with Everest showing like a little cone behind its august neighbors,—it is a revelation of truth more wonderful

than any fancy. At the other end of the system, the north face of Nanga Parbat, with its 26,600 odd feet of rock and glacier, is reported to be a spectacle, marvellous even in that domain of marvels. Most Englishmen know little more of that mountain-wall than the name of the chief summits. A few have had Pisgah-sights of the snows from points in Sikkim and Kashmir, but the great monarchs, like Everest and K<sup>2</sup> in the Karakoram, are hard even to get a glimpse of. We were not even sure till the other day that Everest was the highest, but the observations of the expedition despatched into Western Tibet by Sir Frank Younghusband would seem to have disproved the old native tradition of northern rivals to "Chomokankar." So far our exploration has been very local, and hampered by immense transport difficulties, since the crossing of the foothills is a business by itself. The natives are not a race of mountaineers, and there are no convenient bases to start from. Many of the great snow-passes have been crossed, but of actual climbing there has been little. Mr. W. W. Graham's ascent of one of the peaks of Kabru, a height of about 24,000 feet,—an exploit which was long doubted, but which seems now to be generally accepted,—and the climbs of Sir Martin Conway and the Bullock-Workmans in the Karakoram, are perhaps the most remarkable records. Till mountain travel has enlarged our knowledge of those parts mountaineering proper will be at a disadvantage. It will be a work of time and labor and considerable expense, for the climber must travel well-equipped, and, unless he can secure Goorkha guides, must bring his own porters from the Alps. But, without doubt, it is in the Himalaya that the future history of mountaineering will be made. Mr. Freshfield, who has explored Kangchenjunga with a climber's eye, is far

from believing its conquest impossible, if the tracks of stones and avalanches are studied, and a strong party with trustworthy porters make the attempt in clear weather.

The African snow-mountains stand in a class by themselves. If we leave out the few Abyssinian peaks on which perpetual snow may lie, all are close to the Equator. They have been known to the world by hearsay since the days of Ptolemy, but they were only rediscovered the other day, and Ruwenzori, the most famous, and probably the loftiest, hides itself so mysteriously behind its veil of mist that few travellers have actually seen its snows. The two nearest the coast—Kilimanjaro and Kenya—rise from a high tableland, and a railway now passes midway between them. Kilimanjaro was the first to be conquered, but, like most volcanoes, it is a dull mountain, and the top can be reached without climbing. Kenya, on the other hand, which Mr. H. J. Mackinder ascended a few years ago, has some serious rock-work, and much interesting snow and ice. The Ruwenzori range, the legendary "Mountains of the Moon," rises from dense tropical forests. No measurements have been made, and the few travellers who have explored its base differ surprisingly in their estimates of its height. Mr. Moore puts it at a little over 16,000 feet, while Sir Harry Johnston, Major Gibbons, and Mr. Grogan put it at over 20,000. Both survey and mountaineering on the range are made difficult by the thick mists from the Semliki valley which seem to hang round it at most seasons, so that Stanley once camped near it for a fortnight without being aware of its existence. But the same difficulty is present, though in a less degree, on Kenya, and there is reason to believe that, after a certain altitude is reached, the climber may find a clear sky. Some day, it is certain, the

attempt will be made, for no mountain calls more persistently to the heart of the adventurer. A legend for centuries, and scarcely yet a reality, with its giant mountain-flora and its dazzling harmonies of tropical and alpine coloring; the man who first sets foot on the highest and most mysterious of African peaks will have performed one of the great exploits of pioneering.

Mountaineering out of Europe is, indeed, mountaineering in the grand style, and possible only to the aristocrats of the sport. Just as it is foolish for an indifferent target-shot to go lion-hunting, so the man who finds the ordinary Swiss ascent hard will scarcely be wise to journey to the Himalaya or the Andes. Considering how much has been done of late years there have been surprisingly few casualties—the sad loss of Mr. Donkin's party in the Caucasus, and Mr. Mummery's disappearance on Nanga Parbat, being almost the only recorded disasters; and the reason undoubtedly is to be found in the high quality of the travellers. It is not a sport for many, for besides physical and moral endowments it requires a long purse and an ample leisure. But for those who can attain it, no sport has more kingly rewards. The mountains which they climb are not domesticated things enshrined in guide-books, but an uncharted world known to the dwellers in their valleys only as the haunt of great devils. They must conduct their campaign like skilled generals, bit by bit fighting their way up the glaciers and past the outposts. Their peaks are their own, discovered and explored as well as ascended, an eternal memory in after days, when, grown old and feeble in some settled country, they still dream how—

Heaven is blue above  
Mountains where sleep the unsunned  
tarns.

One does not, as a rule, go to a French

decadent for appreciation of a manly pursuit, but Théophile Gautier, carried out of himself by contemplation of the Matterhorn, has written a noble eulogy on the race of mountaineers: "Ils sont la volonté protestant contre l'obstacle aveugle, et ils plantent sur l'inaccessible le drapeau de l'intelligence humain."

Rock-climbing is essentially the treasure of the humble. It costs little, it can be found almost anywhere within a reasonable journey, and, if properly pursued, is as true mountaineering as the ascent of Ushba or St. Elias. By rock-climbing we do not mean the ascents of recognized rock mountains like the Meije or the Grêpon under the tutelage of guides, but climbing on crags where the climber is a pioneer, and has his way to discover for himself. It has long been a fashion to say that rock-work is less of an art than snow-work, and it is true in the sense that a beginner may prove a very fair cragsman, while no novice can be of any use on ice or snow. But this is only to say that snow is a highly technical affair, while on rock the light of nature is of some assistance; it does not mean that after the principles of both have been mastered, snow offers the fairer field of practice. Long experience is necessary to give a man that instinct about the condition of ice which the best guides possess, but when this instinct is attained there is no such delicacy and variety in the art as good rock-climbing can show. We readily agree that every young climber should make himself proficient on snow, since it is a thing which can be taught, which indeed must be taught, but if he confines himself to it he will miss a whole world of enjoyment. For on an ice-face or in a snow-couloir there is only one way, and progress is made by a succession of monotonous and almost mechanical move-

ments. On rock, on the other hand, there is an endless variety of possible grips, even if the choice of route be limited, while on most cliffs there is an equal variety of routes. The body is exercised in all its muscles, the nerves are perpetually on tension, and each climber is put more seriously on his mettle. On rock, again, a man is at closer quarters with the mountain, diving into chimneys, wriggling across a slab, delicately traversing a narrow ledge, crawling along a knife-edge, or spreading his limbs in the fine free hand-and-foot work of a cliff with good holds. Who can forget the incidents of a first-class climb? The sight of the mountain brings cold chills to the climber's heart, its cliffs, with the mist blown over them, seem so remote and horrific, the ledges where he knows the way lies so precarious and far. On the lower slabs he is fearfully conscious of the weakness of the flesh,—his muscles cramp from long crouching, his hands grow numb, his breath shortens, he feels miserably that he will never achieve the summit, and will be lucky to get home with unbroken bones. And then a few successes give him confidence, until the true zest of the sport seizes him, and he forgets that body which so encumbered him in the valley. He is conscious only that he is an immortal spirit with a fleshly tegument which he is trying somehow to plaster against the face of a cliff. He is far more cool and wary than at home in the Law Courts or the City; he measures every pitch with a skilled eye; if he is defeated in one place he has a dozen resources to draw upon, for there is no patience so fertile as the mountaineer's. And when at last he pulls himself up the last crag to the summit, the revelation is the more wonderful since for hours his eyes have looked at nothing but dead walls of rock. It is certain that a wide prospect of hills and valleys, melt-

ing into the blue horizon, comes more as an illumination to the rock-climber than to one who has seen part of it for half a day from a snow *arête*.

But the thing must be strictly defined. Rock-climbing is mountaineering, and therefore it means primarily getting to the top of a mountain. Ideally it is found on those peaks where any way to the summit involves a serious climb, such as the Meije, the Grèpon, and, perhaps finest instance of all, the Norwegian Skagastølstind; or, to take homelier peaks, Sgurr Alasdair or Sgurr Dearg in Skye. Next best are those mountains where there is a recognized and easy ascent for tourists and a difficult one for the cragsman.

We have examples in the Taschhorn with its Teufelsgrat route, Lliwedd in Wales with its north face, Ben Nevis and its north-eastern buttresses, Sgurr-nan-Gilleann with its "Pinnacle Route," and the Buachaille Etive Mor with its "Crowberry Ridge." For a rock-climb to be serious mountaineering it must be a *road up*; it is not enough that a man goes out of his way on a heather-clad hill to find a boulder to practise experiments on. Otherwise the mountaineer is on a par with the acrobat, and will find his playground just as logically in a suburban quarry as on the high rocks of the Jotunheim. If the idealism of the sport is lost, it becomes simply a form of exercise like skipping, with a spice of danger added—say skipping on a house-top. It may be an innocent and estimable pursuit, but it must surrender the romance with which its votaries have endowed it. To pick out boulders and cliffs, and invent all manner of ways of wriggling to the top, is undoubtedly good practice for the mountaineer, and may well fill up an off-day, but it is no more mountaineering than a training walk, and it is a thousand pities that the two should be confused. Recently a school of climbers has arisen who



have carried this fashion of magnifying the trivial to a curious pitch. Every scratch and dent on their climbs has been mapped and named, and every form of contortion has been invented to enable man to recover something of the skill of his prehensile ancestors. Ascents which have little value in themselves have become notorious through this quaint hobby, and the school is inclined to intolerance and is apt to sneer at the straightforward mountaineer as a lover of the stale and the obvious. The school contains many excellent climbers who have won their spurs elsewhere, and have a right to be heard; but we confess that we do not like this cult of the inessential, this preoccupation with the least valuable aspect of the sport, as if an angler were to spend all his time learning to tie flies. It is valley work, not mountaineering. Nor is it any answer to point to its danger, for you can find equal danger in walking along the rain-pipe of your house. Rock-climbing is far too noble an art to be confused with even the most admirable acrobatics.

It would appear at first sight as if the great authority of the late Mr. A. F. Mummery could be quoted against our view. No modern climber was more imbued with the spirit of the pioneer, or combined more remarkable skill with a more catholic love of mountains. "The essence of the sport lies," he wrote, "not in ascending a peak, but in struggling with and overcoming difficulties." But it is clear that he meant by difficulties difficult ascents. He was arguing against the dilettante view that the sole object of mountaineering is scenery or science, and that therefore it is foolish and criminal to ascend by any but the easiest route. To such obvious nonsense he answered that mountaineering is a sport, and must therefore make demands upon a man's nerve and

skill. An angler may have a passion for nature, and love the mere standing by the river's side, but his first object is not star-gazing but catching fish. A climber's first aim is not the view or a scientific observation, but to get to the top by a hard road. It was for the catholicity of the sport that Mr. Mummery contended and not for its limitation, and his argument holds as much against those who are content to climb a cliff without thinking of its relation to the peak as against the æsthete who would as soon get to the summit by a funicular railway. Elsewhere he has told us that he would be ready to go on climbing though there were no scenery, and to spend his life on the mountains though the endowment of wings put climbing out of the question.

The special merits of rock-climbing on its true interpretation are that it is easy to get, that it can be done alone, or at least without professional guides, and that it gives endless opportunities for new ascents. Leaving out of account the great rock-climbs of the Alps, which are in a class by themselves, there is no mountainous country which does not provide it, and ranges which are despised by the ordinary mountaineer may be full of interest to the lover of crags. The Pyrenees, for example, which are valueless to the snow-climber, afford much excellent cliff-work. To those who can travel, Norway will probably be the playground of the future, for there the climber has an endless field for new conquests. Mr. Slingsby has done much to show what opportunities the *tinder* afford even to mountaineers of long experience; and the beginner who desires to learn the art with the thoroughness which a constant reliance on guides can never give, will probably find Norway or the wonderful miniature peaks of the Lofoten Islands a better training-ground than Chamonix

or the Tyrol. To the traveller, indeed, the world is full of unexplored playgrounds. If Europe falls, he has Canada or New Zealand to fall back upon; and if we may venture to give advice to so haughty a spirit, he will find in the South African Drakensberg rock-work of the most fascinating kind. The northeast buttress of Mont aux Sources rises above the Tugela in a wedge like the Matterhorn, and for fifty miles down the range he will find a succession of buttresses and *couloirs*, in all of which he may achieve the proud satisfaction of the pioneer. At home, also, the field is still largely unexplored. If every summit in these islands has been ascended, many sides have been unclimbed, and in any case there are always new routes for the discoverer. For in rock-climbing, as we have said, the variety of routes is endless, and every new road is in substance a new ascent.

The rocks of Wales and the Lakes are too well-known to need description. If one may venture a complaint, they have been over-exploited, and new ascents have come to mean too much that kind of trick-work with which we are not in sympathy. But no one can complain of the over-exploitation from a mountaineering point of view of the Scottish Highlands. One very good reason is that many of the best peaks are in closely preserved deer-forests; another is their remoteness, and the difficulty of finding a lodging in their neighborhood. There are two great climbing centres where every year and at all seasons mountaineers assemble—Fort William, and Sligachan in Skye; but even there many ascents remain untried and undiscovered. Over the rest of the Highlands, from Ben Hope in Sutherland to the Cobbler at Arrochar, and from Glen Sannox in Arran to the Cairngorms, it is not too much to say that there are few parishes where rock-climbing in some

form is not available. There is every kind of geological formation, from the gabbro of Skye and the porphyry of Ben Nevis to the sandstone of the Torridons and An Teallach, so that the crack-climber, the chimney-climber, and the straightforward cragsman can each find something to satisfy his special aptitude. To those who seek a list we would recommend the excellent guide-book which the Scottish Mountaineering Club are patiently compiling. The amount and variety of excellent climbing which Scotland affords is still very imperfectly realized. Many men spend weeks and a good deal of money every year in expeditions to some valley in the Dolomites, where the rockwork is not a whit harder and much less interesting than can be found on many Scottish hills. Take Fort William, for instance, which is not the most favorable example, since the climbing is almost entirely confined to one mountain, Ben Nevis, and indeed to one side of that mountain. The tourist will miss even the sight of it except when he looks over the precipice at the Observatory; but the man who leaves the track at the little Lochan Meall an t-Suidhe and scrambles into the dark corrie of the Alt a' Mhuilinn, will find on his right as fine a wall of rock as these islands can show. Three great buttresses—the Castle, the Tower, and the North-east—project from the mountain, and enclose between them a number of subsidiary buttresses and gullies. The gullies form interesting ascents in snow, especially as awkward cornices have often to be cut through at their heads, and the numerous ridges give an extraordinary variety of good rock-work. Some, like the ordinary route up the Castle ridge, are possible for the veriest novice who possesses a fair head; and others, like the two steep ridges below the Observatory, offer a problem to the hardened cragsman. A man might well spend weeks there and

find not only a new route every day, but a different quality of work. It is this large compass within a limited area which makes Ben Nevis so attractive, for the climber can graduate the difficulty of his ascents and attempt the harder only when his eye and muscle are in thorough training. He will find many places as sensational as he need wish, and he will see pieces of rock scenery which are scarcely inferior to many famous sights on the Charmoz or the Plan. This is, indeed, one of the great merits of Scottish rock mountains, the illusion of size which the atmosphere, the climate, and the configuration of the landscape give. In clear dry air 3000 feet seem a trifle, but in Scotland, if they are steep enough, they produce a wholly disproportionate effect of immensity. There are cliffs on the North-east buttress where a man looking down a black wall into a misty chasm, flecked with ghostly shadows which are snowdrifts, might well fancy himself in some wild recess of the Alps and not on a hill only a mile high with a road on the other side. The Tower ridge, with its pinnacles and its wonderful gap, offers as simple and quite as interesting an ascent as, say, the popular Matterhorn Chimney on the Riffelhorn; and there are routes on it and on the Observatory ridge which will give the climber something of the satisfaction of the Grèpon crack and other delicacies of the sport. And these are on but one hill, and can be paralleled and excelled by many places in the Coolin, where also may be found a variety of ridge-walks which to the true mountaineer are as much a delight as a face or a chimney.

Rock-climbing, indeed, in its finest form, is so good and on the whole so accessible in these islands, that it behooves its votaries to watch that nothing impairs the freedom and rigor of the game. Two special dan-

gers seem to us to threaten it. One is that vulgarization which we have already hinted at—a vice which takes many forms. There is the attack of the specialist in the shape of the gymnast, who scorns any peak which does not give scope for his peculiar art, and hunts high and low for a bare pinnacle or a smooth face, forgetting that mountains are mountains and not greased poles. The honest man who is happy alike on the Pentlands or on the Dent Blanche, who loves climbing a stiff chimney, but also loves the scenery and the altitude and the winds, and if he cannot get the one will joyfully accept the other, is denied the name of mountaineer. If the sport were to come under the bondage of this intolerant heresy—the heresy of the “professional”—then most of what men have written in its praise would demand an instant recantation. Another form of vulgarity is the over-writing which many think desirable, whether it take the shape of magnifying the dangers of a climb or of setting it forth with pedantic details and many diagrams. Accounts of how A, B, and C made this or that ascent, where A put his left foot, and the length of rope necessary for each pitch, are rarely edifying or useful. In a country where there are no guides, information is always valuable for the climber; but such condescendence upon detail offends against the dignity of the sport. All forms of vulgarization spring from the too exclusive attention to the mere climbing, too little regard for the other and greater constituents. A true mountaineer must climb mountains, but he must not climb them in the spirit of a lunatic, an acrobat, or a steeple-jack. The other danger concerns the conditions under which the sport is followed, and applies almost solely to Scotland. Most of the Highland mountains are either grouse-ground or deer-forests, and the law of trespass being

what it is, the owners have not only the power but a very real right to object to anything which lessens the value of their properties. At the same time, it is easy to take a too narrow view of proprietary rights. Happily on the best rock mountains the question does not arise, but as the sport extends and the climber seeks new ascents, he may find his way barred by a peremptory landlord. On grouse-ground there need be little trouble. Grouse do not live among crags, and on the lower slopes any sane climber can avoid spoiling sport. But even in deer-forests a compromise should be possible. The six weeks of the stalking season should, of course, be a close time to the mountaineer, who will also in his own interest avoid sanctuaries. He will prefer, as a rule, to make his ascents in winter or early spring, when he can do no possible harm to the forest. But even in summer, unless the forest is exceptionally situated, a man who climbs a mountain by a rock face, if he has the courtesy to consult a forester as to his approach to it, can do little mischief, and it is mere pedantry to argue the contrary. Rock-climbers will never be many in number (a "meet" must, of course, make special arrangements), and they are unobtrusive people who make little noise, refrain from flinging bottles about, and modestly hide themselves all day in crannies. It is a delicate subject, and we have no desire to make claims for one form of sport at the expense of others. We gladly admit that many landowners have shown on this matter much good feeling and good sense. But at the same time there are a few who have not, and at the moment there are miles of good climbing to which it is safe to say access is absolutely denied. It is a pity that an intransigent spirit should be shown towards a modest request, for it will spoil the merits of their case when they have

to face unreasonable demands. We live in densely populated islands, and the present system of large tracts of country closely preserved by private owners will not be allowed to continue for ever. Some day—it may be soon—the people will demand the resumption of lands now held sacrosanct for sport either as national-manceuvre-areas or as playgrounds, and as always happens with such demands, they will be pushed far beyond fair limits. If the great landlords wish to keep their case a good one, as we certainly believe it is, they will be wise to grant modest liberties to those who will not abuse them. It must not be said that in Scotland, almost alone among the countries of the world, no man is permitted to stir a yard from the highway. We have no wish to see our Scottish mountains stripped of their wild denizens and turned into a suburban common, but we have an equally strong objection to seeing them reduced to preserves of alien millionaires and guarded with the jealousy of a suburban householder. Such was not the old way of the land or the custom of its elder masters.

"These threatening ranges of dark mountains which in nearly all ages of the world men have looked upon with aversion or with terror, are, in reality, sources of life and happiness far fuller and more beneficent than the bright fruitfulness of the plains." Ruskin, no mountaineer, "but a well-wisher," has written a true summary of our confession of faith. To take life and happiness from wilds which seem to promise neither, is the essence of adventure; and in the humblest form of mountaineering we can discover this quest for a wider horizon and a richer vitality. It is not a vulgar ambition, for the rewards are spiritual and recondite, and cannot be assessed in worldly terms. Hence the fraternity of climbers should be a select one—

true sportsmen who seek the heart of the matter, adventure, skill, vigor of body, and sanity of mind, and are singularly indifferent to the swaddling-clothes in which too many sports are being wrapped to-day. It should also be, as it has been in the past, a cultivated one, since it is only the trained eye and the understanding heart that can fully enjoy the rewards. But, granted that the high traditions are kept unsmirched, the sport will always command its votaries, being one well suited to these latter days when civil-

*Blackwood's Magazine.*

ization smothers us all, and we must seek out savagery for ourselves. Mountains restore us to the life of Nature in its austere and simplest form. "Such winds as scatter young men through the world" will not cease to blow while Orion shines in the heavens; and yearly we shall have the spectacle of sober citizens forgetting the duties to which it has pleased God to call them, and on some snow saddle or rocky face seeking and finding "life and happiness."

## THE QUEEN'S MAN.

### A ROMANCE OF THE WARS OF THE ROSES.

#### CHAPTER XXI.

The music of the bells so filled all the air, that the other sounds of the royal arrival only faintly reached Margaret's tower on the eastern side of the castle. From its windows the bridge was hidden, neither could the great court and the stairs be seen, where Lord Marlowe was now welcoming the King and Queen. The distant trumpets set the waiting-maids wondering, and as Dame Kate was not there to keep them in order, they slipped down one by one to the inner court to find out what was happening. It was better to do this, they argued, than to disturb their mistress as she watched Sir Thomas on what they all believed was his death-bed. If there was really something to tell, then they could go to her; in the meanwhile curiosity led them, one and all, to start on this journey of discovery, leaving their mistress unattended.

As the last girl crossed the threshold, she was met and pushed aside by Master Antonio, springing like a wild animal through the door.

"Ah, have a care! What news?

Whither so fast?" she cried, as he dashed past her.

"Go and find out," he said, and leaped on up the stairs, laughing wildly.

The girl lingered and looked after him. "'Tis something joyful," she said to herself. "Another victory for the Red Rose? He bears the news to Mistress Meg. Well, we have had sorrow enough, and maybe this is something to bring the Vicar to life again. They have all left me behind,—haste, haste!" and she scampered over the damp stones of the small court, dived under a black archway, and flew in pursuit of her companions.

High up in the tower the old priest lay in his bed, conscious so far that he knew where he was and recognized the dear child who watched and tended him, but so weak from the fever which the damp and starvation of the dungeon had brought on, that he could scarcely speak or turn or lift his hand, or use his brain to think reasonably. His sheets and pillows were fine and soft, his curtains and the coverlet thrown over him were of rich cream-colored silk embroidered with red



roses. All this was in strange contrast with the ascetic hardness and simplicity of his own home life. But when he touched the coverlet with wasted fingers, and looked up at Meg with eyes of distressed remonstrance, she leaned over him and said, trembling: "Dear Sir Thomas, my grandfather died without my care. His old friends are all that is left to me. Lie still, I beg you, and let me have my way. There is peace, you know. Lord Marlowe commands, and we are safe, for she, they tell me, she, the arch-enemy—"

His lips moved. "She is dead?"

Meg bowed her head and turned away. The Vicar's eyelids drooped and his lips went on moving. Looking back, she knew that he was praying for the miserable soul who had brought such harm and sorrow to Ruddiford.

For Meg herself the news of Lady Marlowe's death had come as the first real gleam of light in the dark tragic labyrinth she had trod ever since Christmas Eve. That evil presence gone, Harry near and faithful, it seemed as if there might be some good and joy in life after all.

She moved to the window, and looked out into the tree-tops where rooks were building; a breath of spring was stealing across the meadows; the distant trumpets were ringing out triumphantly; but she heard only the rooks and the bells. "Why," she asked herself for the hundredth time, "why did I at first believe in the Lady Isabel, nay, almost love her?—those dark eyes smiling, that stately look, those long soft hands?"

A slight sound from the bed made her look that way. It seemed that Sir Thomas wished to speak; there was a light in his face, almost a smile. Unconsciously, as Meg afterwards thought, she must have asked her question aloud.

"My child," he whispered, "you knew

not wickedness. Alas, like an angel of light—but do not, for all that, lose faith—"

Even as she leaned over him, trying to catch the indistinct murmurs with which he strove to keep Heaven about her, this child of his love who had been so roughly driven out of Eden, even at that moment Antonio came to the door with noiseless feet, opened it without knocking, was beside her before she knew, his bold hand touching her arm, her waist, his eyes full of triumph which, when she turned with a sudden start to meet them, made her flush crimson and then turn pale.

She stepped back, instantly freeing herself, and said very coldly: "What do you here, Antonio? I have not sent for you; I do not need you. Begone at once."

"Patience, fair lady," he said. "I have news for you. Hear it, and know that you can no longer order me away. Your three lovers, sweet Mistress Meg, have drawn lots for you, and poor Antonio,—even he, your lover from childhood,—has gained the prize. So now,—I will not even ask you for the kiss you refused me a few days since, till I have made sure of what is my own. Cheer up, Sir Thomas; is there life enough in you to join our hands in marriage instantly? Do you say no? A prick of this dagger might rouse you to sit up in your bed."

Sir Thomas gasped, with wide-open eyes of horror. "God and His Saints protect us! What wickedness is this?" he muttered breathlessly.

Meg stood at bay, like a beautiful living creature attacked by wolves, or devils in form of men. "You have drawn lots? You are lying to me," she said. "It is a trick of your false tongue. You, and—"

"I and Jasper Tilney, and mad Marlowe," he said, and laughed. "We made the bargain before we took the castle. I showed them the way in,

and they gave me my chance of the reward we all desire. We drew for the longest of three straws, and it has fallen to me. Tilney threatened to kill me, attacked me with his sword, but I escaped him. As for my Lord, he is a very just gentleman, and trusts in Providence."

It seemed as if Meg was turned to stone. Antonio's sneer was at first nothing; the fact was all. That babble of straws between Harry Marlowe and Jasper Tilney, which had made her believe that captivity had shaken her dear lover's wits,—this frightful truth was its foundation. She remembered now every word that he had said last night, remembered the agonized look of remorse and heart-wrung pity with which he had told her that he could do no other, that some debt of honor must be paid, and bade her trust in God and in him. It was not madness then; Harry Marlowe had actually ventured their lives,—hers and his—on the length of a straw. And the powers he trusted in had failed him; he had tempted God, she swiftly thought, and was punished; but where was he now? It was impossible, beyond thinking, that he could give her up, alone and unprotected, into the hands of the Italian. Did he expect her to save herself? Certainly she would do so, if she must throw herself near a hundred feet from the tower window, to be dashed to pieces on the hard stones below; but where was he? And again, with panting breath, she said to Antonio,—"Villain, you lie!"

He answered her unspoken thoughts. "Ah! you will not believe that my Lord cared for you so little? You think, if the story were true, he would not give you up to me? You ask why he is not here? Your eyes ask it a dozen times, looking at the door. See you, fair lady, this mad Marlowe is a very honorable gentleman. He fulfils his part of the bargain. I gave him and Tilney the

castle; they promised me my chance. That chance has given you and Ruddiford to me. As to that, I care little for Ruddiford. No more mud and fog for you and me, my beautiful. Your mother was Italian, torn from Italy; your husband shall carry you back there."

It seemed as if she hardly heard him. He quailed before the scorn in her eyes, as she stood, young and slender, but so majestic, her hand resting on the old priest's pillow. Sir Thomas glared upon him with eyes wide and hollow, and lantern jaws and cheeks so bloodless that he might have been a dead man already, but for the fiery spirit and soul roused to new life by this presence of victorious evil.

"Where are they?" Meg demanded. "You say that Jasper Tilney tried to kill you? I honor him for it. Where is he? And where then is my Lord?"

"Jasper? I escaped him, I tell you. I locked him in and left him swearing. And,—the last news has not reached the fair lady of Ruddiford? The lot was scarcely drawn, the straws scarce measured, as they lay on our three palms, when a trumpet draws my Lord to the window. Over his shoulder I saw a troop ride in; I saw a lady wave her handkerchief; I saw the royal standard of the Red Rose. Queen Margaret has arrived,—I believe King Henry and the Prince are with her,—running away from York—but yet they make a goodly show. Off hurries my Lord, your precious Marlowe; I doubt, sweet Meg, the old love may be stronger than the new. Ah, I have touched you? Come, 'tis better to be first with the little than last with the great. And now, Sir Thomas, you have known us both long. There, let me lift you on your pillows. Gently, I shall not hurt you, old man, if you obey me. Stand here, Mistress Meg. No book, but he knows his part, or a little sharp argument shall remind him.

Rings,—you have one there,—here is mine. Now marry us, Vicar, and quickly."

Meg stood immovable, only lifting her hand to her head. Was she in her senses? How much more could she bear? Why,—a voice dinned in her brain, why keep your self and life for this strange man, content to lose you, forgetting that you need his guardianship, and at this supreme moment following other duties—perhaps willingly—what were the last words, or almost the last, that Harry's step-mother had said in Meg's hearing? That the Queen loved him, that he had loved her, till Meg's fair face distracted him and made him false to her! And now, what said Antonio? the old love stronger than the new.

All the room, Antonio's beautiful evil face, his eyes that burned into hers, his half-sheathed dagger, swam red before her sight. "False!" she said under her breath; then with a sudden and great effort she made a step towards the door. "The King and Queen have come to Ruddiford," she said aloud. "The castle is mine; I must receive their Highnesses. I must go; where are my people?"

She was trembling, and tottered slightly as she walked. Antonio stepped in her way, and suddenly seized her in his arms, crying, "No, my adored! First be my wife, and then together to the Queen, if you will,—my prize, my love, my lady!"

For a moment the girl's senses were almost gone. He held her close and kissed her passionately; then she struggled violently to be free.

"Child of the devil! Satan himself! Let her go, or God's curse be upon you!" the sick man shrieked, starting up in his bed.

Such supernatural strength seemed suddenly to be given him, that in another moment Antonio would have been seized and dragged backwards by the

bony hands already clutching at his cloak, had not stronger help been clanking with armed tread on the stairs.

Jasper Tilney burst open the door and strode into the room with his sword drawn, followed by several of his Fellowship.

He did not speak a word or ask a question, but caught Antonio by the throat and forced him to his knees. Margaret, suddenly released, fled back to the old priest and leaned trembling, white with rage and horror, against the head of his bed, while he fell back and panted on his pillows, the flame of life in his face dying down into an ashen grayness. For a moment his hard breathing was the only sound in the room.

"I warned thee, Tonio," said Jasper's deep voice.

"Nay, let me up, let me up," Antonio cried, crimson and choking. "Your hand,—you are killing me! Remember the oath,—your honor,—the straws—ah!"

"Honor! This knave talks of honor," Jasper said, looking first towards the priest and Margaret, then turning towards his companions. "We drew lots; the longest straw was to give the prize, the Ruddiford estates and Mistress Roden's hand in marriage. 'Twas against my will and judgment, for the Devil likes his own way in these things. But my Lord Marlowe found 'twas the only way to gain the castle,—some secret entrance this rascal knew. And he made sure all would be well; the lot would fall to himself, or even to me, and then we two men could fight out the matter. I said that if this Antonio pulled the longest straw, I would kill him. I meant it,—but now I mean it a dozen times more, for the villain marked the straw. He was sure of winning—ah, wast thou not, Master Tonio? and so thou didst win. But the poor old dame who helped

thee, when she found out the truth, she and I being locked in by thine own craft together, repented and confessed thy sins and her own. And I am not bound, like a priest, to hold my tongue upon them. So prepare to die, friend Tonio. I will give thee five minutes to confess thy bad life to the Vicar in his bed yonder. Mistress Roden, at your service; my men will attend you downstairs. Mark you, the second straw was mine."

Margaret collected her failing senses, drew herself erect, met Jasper's gaze, as his voice dropped on the last words, with eyes as proud and fearless as his own. "Silence, sir," she said. "I will hear no more of your insulting bargain. I am mistress here, remember. Your friends can escort me to meet the Queen"; she bowed her head towards the fierce Fellowship crowding about the door. "As to this miserable boy,"—she looked at Antonio, struggling under Jasper's hand—"do not kill him; but send him away, for I will have him in my house no more."

For the moment her quietness had a strange effect; the men looked at each other. Antonio seemed suddenly to lose his fighting spirit, and tried to crawl to her feet. Behind the group at the door Dame Kate crept in, sobbing, and Jasper pointed at her as she came. "Ah, dame, 'tis not wise to help a traitor."

"He deceived me, traitor to me as to you!" the old nurse burst out angrily, and made her way round by the bed to her mistress who looked at her with unseeing eyes and said very low: "Come with me, nurse. I must dress to receive the Queen."

The two women passed through into an inner room. Jasper's companions began to mutter among themselves, and he, still holding Antonio, glanced from him to the half-lifeless figure in the bed.

"To thy prayers, Tonio," he said, and

dragged him to the priest's feet. "Quick, or the old man will not live to hear thee."

For a moment the Italian pretended to yield to his fate. He hung slackly upon the hand that grasped his collar; he did not resist; it was a passive body that Jasper dragged along the floor. He even groaned something of *pardon* and *mercy*, to which Jasper replied: "Ask mercy of God; you will not have it from men. I am not a pitiful girl, to be touched by your pretty face—dog!"

Antonio leaped to his feet, and with a wild-cat swiftness drove his dagger at Jasper's throat. He just missed his aim, but struck him on the jaw, cutting his cheek so that the blood streamed from it. Jasper cried out sharply with rage and pain. Antonio, free for the instant, hardly knowing whether he had wounded his enemy mortally or not, made a dash for the door. Three of the men standing there caught him and held him fast.

"Ah! would you, my lad? Nay, don't struggle. Not much odds for the like of you, to die with shrift or without it," said one of them.

Jasper snatched a napkin from the old priest's pillow, and held it to his bleeding face. "Here's a pretty mess for my lady's chamber," he said grimly. "Downstairs with him; make an end of the young devil, as quick and quiet as may be. I follow you. Leonard, Ralph, John, Giles, Lance, stay you here, friends. Attend Mistress Roden to meet their Highnesses. My duty to her,—say a cat has scratched me, and I go to hang it on a tree, or drown it with a stone round its neck. A plague on this cut! one of you fellows must bind it up for me. Here, see to the Vicar. Tell Mistress Roden she will hear more of me. My Lord and I will settle that matter between us."

He strode out of the room. The young fellows he left there nudged each

other and laughed at this strange turn of affairs.

They had always known there was something weak at the root of Jasper, though his position, fortune, and desperate daring had made him their leader. It was not the first time he had thrown away his own advantage, and they, as it were, had taken it up and carried it after him.

"Why, he drew the second straw," they whispered to each other, "and as the villain Tonio cheated, the prize is rightly his. What is he doing? Leaving her free to join that lover of hers, whom he shut up for weeks to keep him out of her way? Leonard, what think you?"

Leonard, the older man, Jasper's grim and envious lieutenant, stepped back and joined the group. He had busied himself for a few minutes, with hands which could be tender, in settling the Vicar's pillows and giving him a few drops of cordial. The old man lay with closed eyes, breathing more evenly, but now almost unconscious of what went on around him.

The five men had no fear of his hearing them, as they talked matters over in low tones among themselves. Ralph, John, Giles, and Lance, all strong fellows of fair birth and a certain education, had no doubt or varying opinion as to what ought to be done in Jasper Tilney's interest. Leonard agreed with them. He saw the difficulties better; he also knew how to surmount them. He thought of several improvements on their first rough plan. The five were still in deep conference when the inner door opened again, and Mistress Roden came back, followed by Dame Kate in red-eyed penitence.

All eyes were fixed on Margaret. The men who had been speaking remained with parted lips; those who had laughed over their plotting became suddenly grave. For the first time in their lives, perhaps, they saw a beau-

tiful girl beautifully dressed, the lady of a castle prepared to receive Royalty.

Margaret's hair in its rich color and quantity, wildly streaming before, was now gathered into a gold net; round her lovely throat she wore the pearls her grandfather had given her on Christmas Day. Her gown was of white satin and white fur, laced with silver; her long and heavy girdle was of silver, set with diamonds and pearls. Holding herself very erect, she looked like a young princess about to receive her lieges. The party of adventurers, who had never seen anything so stately, so exquisite, so cold and strange, stared at her in silence. Lancelot, the youngest and the gentlest, caught his breath. Leonard's stern mouth relaxed, and he rubbed his hands together.

Margaret walked up to the bed and leaned over Sir Thomas, laying her hand softly on his forehead. He smiled faintly and his eyelids trembled. "Dear Sir Vicar," she said, "I have not a black garment in the world, or I would not deck myself so, when I should be mourning for my grandfather. Yet he would have told me,—you know it—to wear my best for the King and Queen. I am going now to wait upon them; these gentlemen from King's Hall will follow me, and Dame Kate will stay here with you. I will come back soon, and Lord Marlowe with me; we will ask for your blessing Sir Thomas, on our betrothal. Live, live till then!"

Standing again upright, she turned to Leonard, and as she moved, her white gown trailed in the blood on the floor, where it had dropped heavily from Jasper's wound. She did not notice it; almost it seemed as if she had forgotten all that had happened before, the very existence of Antonio, the story of the three straws. She showed no surprise that Jasper and Antonio and several of the men were



gone. For a moment, as she looked silently at Leonard, standing square and martial before her, so stony a look came into her lovely wild eyes, so colorless was her face, that he half expected her to fall senseless at his feet.

He spoke, with a rough laugh of admiration. Master Leonard had not even the manners, such as they were, of his birth and time. "By the Lord, fair lady, you might be dressed for a wedding!" he said.

"My own wedding, perhaps," she answered him quietly. "Lord Marlowe is in the castle, and the Queen, my godmother,—what could be more fitting?"

"Ay, mistress, we saw him, your fine Lord, a few minutes since. I'm bound to say he looked a happier man than when we had him caged in our garret and fed him with what we could spare. A very handsome lady, too, is the Queen. There he knelt beside her, like the best courtier of them all and something more, holding her gracious hand to his mouth like a starved man who wanted to eat it, and she in no hurry to draw it away. There sat King Henry, save his poor half-fledged Grace! Had I been him, I would soon have stopped their cooling and courting."

Leonard hardly knew if she heard him, as he grumbled on. His companions chuckled, except Lance, who frowned, his young heart suddenly touched by the tragic, helpless beauty of Margaret. It seemed that if she heard, she did not choose to understand; not an eyelash moved, not a tinge of color came, as the words fell on her ears. "Let us go," she said, and stepped towards the door.

The men followed her closely; one or two of them muttered to each other that the pearls were worth more than the maiden who wore them. Leonard turned back as soon as she had passed the door, and with a twist of his hand

pulled the embroidered silk coverlet off the sick man's bed.

"I have more use for this than you, father," he said, and shut the door after him without noticing Dame Kate's cry.

Margaret walked on down the stairs, looking straight before her, noticing nothing. She passed the door of a lower room, where two or three of her maidens, having run back to their duty, were waiting huddled with terrified faces. Some horror was happening, they scarcely knew what; they had seen Jasper Tilney, wounded, and men dragging one they thought to be Antonio. They would have clung to their mistress's skirts, had not something in her face, and the fierce looks of the men, kept them back. Leonard, indeed, with a great roll under his arm, pushed them all with one hand into the room, and clanged the door upon them and their idle embroidery frames.

At the foot of the stairs, in a dark place by the door that opened into the small court, there was a slight scuffle, a smothered scream. Two of the men slipped out and ran in quest of horses, to bring them to the place Leonard had appointed. He and the others turned the opposite way, carrying among them a figure swathed and muffled from head to feet in long folds of cream-colored silk embroidered with red roses.

"Listen, pretty mistress," Leonard growled in his prisoner's ear. "Be still, and we do not hurt you. Scream or struggle, you are gagged and bound. What is that you say? 'Harry, Harry'? Nay, my lass, his Lordship is not thinking of you. Be content; we'll find you a better bridegroom. You are his by lot, and King's Hall will give you up to no Harry, so long as his Fellowship are there to stand by him."

The willows by the Ruddy saw strange sights that afternoon, when the mist, stealing again over the marshy





meadows, had veiled the yellow wintry sun.

The small river-door in the castle wall, by which Antonio had escaped when he went to call help from King's Hall against Lady Marlowe, was cautiously opened again. Three men carried out a woman, who lay in their hands as if dead. Keeping as far as possible in the shadow of the buildings, they brought her across the sluice and the weir. They laid her down by the willows, in a place where a bank of earth hid her, gorgeously wrapped as she was, from the ramparts and any high windows of the castle.

The rooks cawed and flapped among their new nests, high above in the tall trees, and flew, swaying and floating in the air, over the meadows and back again. The castle was full of the clamor of the Lancastrian troops, and from the town the loud joy-bells kept ringing, while in the hall Queen Margaret looked down smiling into her servant's eyes and said: "But where is Sir William Roden's sweet granddaughter? Where is the young Margaret we held at the font? Nay, my Lord, we heard rumors—"

The willows by the Ruddy saw more men creeping up through the mist from the bridge, leading horses with them, and then Jasper Tilney's Fellowship mounted, and the strong Leonard carried his fainting prisoner slung across

his saddle, and so galloped away with her southward, to the house of him who had drawn the second straw.

The willows by the Ruddy saw even more that day. Under their very branches, where they grew close to the water and hung over it, a dead man was washed by. His white face rose out of the muddy stream, as the grass on the bank caught his hair. The willows and the water knew him well. It was not twenty-four hours since he had dashed into the stream at this very place to save an old woman from drowning,—for his own ends, like everything else he did in his short life. The river had not drowned him, though the cold water now had his young body, strong and beautiful, born under the Italian sun, to play with as it would. His life-blood had ebbed from many wounds with which the Fellowship carried out their leader's threatening.

The boy might have died triumphantly, for there was a smile on his pale lips. He might have died with two thoughts in his unshriven soul,—that the old master, whose life he vainly begged from a worse creature than himself, had loved and trusted him to the end,—and that, fairly or foully, he had snatched one moment's wild joy in the hour of defeat and death,—he had kissed his lady.

Macmillan's Magazine.

(To be continued.)

## THE DUBLIN SCHOOL.

For the last ten or fifteen years the Dublin school of writers has given its friends many little flutters of pleasurable excitement. To quote from some of its English critics, it has given us a poet "equal to Keats"; "a book of perfect lyrics," according to an admirer of the period; a book of essays which

was popular enough for the *Punch* parodist; some stories, some translations from the Irish; and, last, some little plays, which all seem to unite in praising and—for the present, at least—forgetting. Ten or fifteen years is a large bite out of even the most generous youth. As the Syracusan idylist

has it: "We all wax gray from the temples downward: a man must do somewhat while his knees are yet nimble." It is high time the Dublin school did somewhat for its friends.

Comparisons are odious, especially when one's friends suffer by them; but one cannot help thinking of some contemporary young men elsewhere whose beards were fresh on their chins about the same time. Those still youthful giants, Mr. Barrie and Mr. Kipling, were also definitely emerging ten or fifteen years ago. The Dublin school once looked like having a voice as distinct and persistent as theirs; a quite different voice, but still an authentic one. That voice was Mr. Yeats's, who practically stood alone for Dublin in 1889:

... Away with us he's going  
The solemn-eyed—  
He'll hear no more the lowing  
Of the calves on the warm hill-side;

Nor the kettle on the hob  
Sing peace into his breast;  
Nor see the brown mice bob  
Round and round the oatmeal  
chest. . . .

It was near enough to simple earth, and the peace and poetry of it, for favorable augury. In literature, in poetry above all, the simpler the early note, the nearer earth the rhymer goes, the safer seems prophesy about him. And in Mr. Yeats's first two books one found so large an amount of work as good and well-sustained as "The Stolen Child," so many pieces of even greater merit—the "Michael Dwyer Fairy Song," the "Lake Isle of Innisfree," for example—that there was little violence to judgment in admitting him to a place in English poetry beside Keats. 1889 and 1902 dated these books. As one sure of himself, he seemed to take time. Then, just as his friends were expecting another book of lyrics to be due, the unexpected happened. An-

other book of lyrics—the "book of perfect lyrics," to which the admirer referred—did appear; but it was not by Mr. Yeats. For him and his readers there then entered the most unexpected thing of all; for the very next year (1895) he suddenly "collected" his little sheaves of published verse into one volume, practically ceased to write lyrics in his early simpler vein, and turned his attention to prose.

What was the new voice like?

Dark head by the fire-side brooding,  
Sad upon your ears  
Whirlwinds of the earth intruding  
Sound in wrath and tears . . .

Keep the secret sense celestial  
Of the starry birth,  
Though about you call the bestial  
Voices of the earth . . .

Such was its dominant note: material beauty of every kind but a snare for souls; spiritual "beauty" all. There was much in this little book of fifty "Songs by the Way" (back "to God who is our home") to justify high praise, though to call it a book of "perfect lyrics" was to give way to enthusiasm. It was a real thing, however; fatally real. It put back the clock and re-charged the electric Dublin air with thoughts and spiritual questionings. Its author, suddenly finding himself the central figure among the younger pagans just then rallying round Mr. Yeats, was not long without seeing the fatality of it. Artist, literary man, spiritual agonist, "A. E." had suffered much, as young men of genius always suffer, subjectively. An Eastern legend tells of a thirsty traveller who finds by a well in the desert a bowl from which he drinks. The water tastes bitter from the bowl, yet the water of the well itself is sweet; for the vessel had retained the bitter flavor of mortality. "A. E." had drunk deeply of Eastern wisdom, but had not yet been to the well. And so there was to be no con-



tinuation, no development, in this direction either. His "Earth Breath" (Lane, 1897) was a palinode, an apologia to Mother Earth and her "voices," to whom he felt he had scarcely done the wider justice. That effort exhausted him. The "Divine Vision" (Macmillan) of last year is hardly worthy of mention; and the "Mask of Apollo" (in prose) of this does not count, as he himself sadly avows. So much for the poets.

And what of prose, the appeal of which is to the reason and intelligence; which, unlike the vehicle of the imagination, admits of so little license without unclassing itself, or, at least, weakening its appeal?

Here it becomes necessary to distinguish. On the one hand were the men of exact scholarship: Professors Mahaffy, Tyrrell, Bury (then at Dublin), and Dowden. These distinguished men are, so to speak, world scholars. They might as well—or even better—have been born to Oxford or Cambridge as to Dublin. Scholarship, criticism, scarcely becomes localized more than once in a century, unless it be of the sterling variety, as at Tübingen. It belongs to world progress; its business is not with mushroom-school growths, so often springing up in a night and ending in smoke; and it is slow to recognize them. From the University, excepting its Chair of Literature, the Dublin school has scarcely yet won favorable recognition.

On the other hand there was what is called the "Celtic school" about which one may say that there is no such body. A "Celtic spirit," perhaps; but not a school. Most of the so-called "Celts" might just as well have been born—like Mr. Kipling—in Bombay, so diversified are their activities and abiding-places. Dublin claims but a small portion of their fame. Even the "Celtic spirit"—that evaporating mystery for the puzzled journalist—declines defini-

tion. It is more profitable to ask: Had Dublin at this time produced a single book of prose attracting, by some distinctive or daring note of originality like "Plain Tales" or "Auld Licht Idylls," a large English audience? The answer is, of course, in the negative.

Yet any one seeking, a decade ago, for an almost violently original note in Dublin's prose literature to place beside its poetry could have found it only in a now almost forgotten little book called "Two Essays on the Remnant." This book was a revelation in the way of style even to readers of the passing generation of Arnold, Newman, Ruskin and Pater. It was rapidly running into editions when "O. S." in *Punch* and the Oxford humorists took it in hand and made great play with the notion of a "remnant" (Isaiah's "remnant," Matthew Arnold's "remnant") of chosen people going off into the wilderness and leaving cities, "and sorrow barracadoed ever more within the walls of cities," to take care of themselves. Yet when the worst was said this little book admittedly contained one of the best eulogies of Wordsworth ever penned. "John Eglinton" the author called himself. Six years elapsed before he was heard of again, lending a sort of reluctant hand to a certain section of Irish idealists by allowing them to print his next book in Kilkenny. Some of the essays in "Pebbles from a Brook" would not have hurt the reputation of Schopenhauer, but Goliath the Philistine was none the worse for them. There seemed to be only one objection to the publication of such a book in a place like Kilkenny. There were no readers there. In Dublin there were few enough. In London or Oxford there would have been some. "Kilkenny" wrote its epitaph.

Thus, up to 1897, a Dublin school had made three distinct bids for attention. The first was by Mr. Yeats's wonderful lyrics, with their note of

morning freshness and *naïveté*, as of a soul newly opening eyes on a young world into which sorrow had come only as a picturesque accident. The second voice was A. E.'s. He seized upon the lyrical form for expressing himself and gave a terrible note to it, making it express the travail of the individual spirit in the midst of universal illusion. The third voice was that of the critic, "John Eglinton," who brought philosophic insight, deep scholarship, and a consummate style, to bear upon Dublin's seven devils of patriotism, politics, religion, theosophy, mysticism, magic, and metaphysics. Separately considered, progress, continuation, development, might have been argued from any of the three. Taken together the result was non-cumulative, negative, snapping off abruptly and seeming to end there. So that, a few years ago, it was safe to say that from Mr. Yeats a new book of lyrical wizardry like "Oisín," from "A. E.," another book of those early spiritual songs, and from "John Eglinton" another clear confident statement, as of the born stylist in the first happy exercise of his powers—all these things were again impossible. They manifestly belonged to the past. It was safe to say that if the emergence of the Dublin school ever took place it would be in some other direction.

Doubtless some instinctive thought of this kind assisted at the sudden birth and growth of the Irish National Theatre. The younger talents of the Dublin school, beholding the sacrifice of their pioneers who had now made independent thought possible for them, were doubtless instinctively casting about for some means of expression which should be free of Dublin's contentious enemies and destroyers of quiet literary activity, religion, politics, patriotism. It was inevitable that they should light on the splendid neutral ground of the Drama, where the show-

man should be mute and one's precious creed and personality counts for little or nothing. The theatre was, so to speak, in the air. Mr. Yeats had already had some plays performed in London. The Irish National Theatre was established with him at its head.

At first the little plays produced (in hired concert and lecture-halls) were of the politically contentious sort, and they provoked controversy. But the theatre is the most rapid of educative influences, and we shortly hear less of it as an axe-grinding institution and more of it as a centre of thoroughgoing artistic aims. Last year, through the beneficence of a private donor, it acquired a house of its own. This house has a special patent restricting it (through the opposition of the older Dublin houses) to plays produced by Irishmen on Irish subjects or to foreign works other than English. The production of Irish plays has gone forward with such surprising speed that, to judge from Mr. Yeats's report of progress, given in the organ of the Society, *Tamhain* (Unwin), most of the young Irishmen and women are rapidly becoming either actors or playwrights. They need not be ashamed of an enthusiasm which they share with greater minds and older heads.

And how do the plays themselves rank? Up to the present the best plays of the Society have excelled rather in characterization than in what we call "construction," plot. Even in the work of the most notable of the younger men, Mr. J. M. Synge, plot is almost entirely absent, but the characters are absolutely true to life—the life of present-day Irish peasant and fisher-folk. Mr. Yeats tells us that the aims of the Society are summed up in "good playwriting, good speaking, and good acting" (scenery is almost disregarded). Good speaking and acting the members of the Society seem to have rapidly attained, perhaps because

the demand for what was wanted admitted of little doubt. But the requisition for "good playwriting" is more ambiguous. Mr. Yeats lays stress on "poetry," which is natural enough in him. Poetry is important; and, indeed, poetry in abundance the lives of the poor folk depicted in these Irish plays are seen to have. But a play cannot live and insist upon itself by poetry alone: something of strength, much of cohesion, will inevitably be lacking to it. That something is just what the

The Academy.

Irish Theatre now seems to lack for its due emergence. We can only say for the present that the foundations—going down to life itself—are well and truly laid; and that the augury for the future is good. Mr. Yeats at least looks forward in the right spirit. We are yet as children, he says, groping our way: "but we may grow up, for we have as good hopes as any other sturdy ragamuffin." It is, perhaps, never too late to speak of "growing up" if one feels about it in this way.

C. W.

### DULNESS.

It was some years ago that the *Daily Telegraph*, seeking to propound something agreeably stimulating by way of controversy to tide over the "silly season," asked its readers the question, "Is Marriage a Failure?" The question, for whatever reason, was not finally settled. An opportunity has now been given to the readers of the *Daily Express* of putting before the public their views on the subject of "The Dulness of Married Life," and perhaps one gets, in this second series of letters, rather nearer a satisfying answer to the question, "Is to be Married to be Dull?" For it is not difficult for any one to imagine the dull side of married life, and many of the *Daily Express's* correspondents have evidently found it just about as dull as is conceivable. They have not been at pains to conceal the fact; some, possibly, would not have managed to conceal it had they tried to do so. The recitals of the different kinds of degrees of dulnesses to which married people, it would seem, are practically bound to succumb have provided nothing very striking in the way of personal narrative.

It is surely a distressing spectacle,—

so many dull people complaining in print that they cannot escape from, so many other dull people. The general complaint seems to run in very much the same groove. It all begins happily enough: to put another application to Thomas Haynes Bayly's lines:—

A wreath of orange blossom  
When next we met, she wore.

That, of course, was at the wedding, when everybody made speeches in the old-fashioned way, and drank healths, and faithfully followed all the rest of the jolly, optimistic customs, dashing handfuls of rice in the face of the bride, and so forth. But such enthusiasms are not lasting.

The expression of her features  
Was more thoughtful than before,

seems to be the experience of at least a certain number of the *Express's* correspondents after a year or two of compulsory companionship, and after that comes either a solo or duet, in the same impassioned strain:—

Oh give me new faces, new faces,  
I've seen those around me a fortnight  
or more,

Some people grow weary of things as  
of places,

But persons to me are a much greater  
bore.

I care not for features, I'm sure to dis-  
cover

Some exquisite trait in the first that  
you send,

My fondness falls off when the novel-  
ty's over;

I want a new face for an intimate  
friend.

As to that, Mr. Lang's criticism may  
perhaps stand as perpetual comment:  
"This is perfectly candid; we should  
all prefer a new face, pretty, every  
fortnight"—

Come, I pray you and tell me this,  
All good fellows whose beards are  
gray,

Did not the fairest of the fair  
Common grow and wearisome ere  
Ever a month had passed away?

Possibly; but from where does all the  
dulness and wearisomeness come; from  
without, or from within? It is easy  
enough to imagine how dull this or that  
form of companionship may be; Mr.  
H. G. Wells, for example, has por-  
trayed it admirably faithfully in "Love  
and Mr. Lewisham," to take a modern  
novel, though Mr. George Gissing in  
"New Grub Street" perhaps said al-  
most the last word on the subject of  
the grinding dulness of a certain sort  
of married life. Is it duller for the  
husband or the wife, given that each,  
as it were, exudes dulness; when the  
wife sends her husband out in the  
morning to work in the routine of a  
City office, and when the husband  
comes back to his wife in the evening  
to find her mending his own or making  
somebody else's clothes; and when  
neither has any brighter or greater out-  
look on the future than the prospect  
of remaining precisely as they are, so  
far as their position in the world of  
their fellow-creatures is concerned, for  
the rest of their lives? If you can

sum up that outlook on life, it comes  
pretty much to the cookery-book ques-  
tion, "What shall we do with the cold  
mutton?"—the only satisfactory an-  
swer being that cold mutton is really  
a very capital dish, and that what you  
ought to do with the cold mutton is to  
eat it. After all, it is possible to find  
persons who are so thoroughly recon-  
ciled with certain prospects of dulness  
as to be capable of deciding that a  
lunch of cold mutton is absolutely ap-  
petizing. But no dull person, perhaps,  
could decide that.

One of the greatest causes of domes-  
tic discomfort, George Eliot wrote, is  
a different taste in jokes. The capacity  
to take part in or to understand a  
joke, of whatever kind, and to under-  
stand it in the right way, being one of  
the severest tests of any intellect, that  
is probably true. Clearly it may ac-  
count for the inability of certain peo-  
ple to live together happily in a mar-  
ried state, if it is true, as it assuredly  
is true, that it is accountable for all  
sorts of squabbles and arguments be-  
tween people who need not live near  
each other, and would not do so if they  
could, especially if they had to talk  
about their tastes in literature. For  
who of us is not, or may not be, "dull"  
in somebody else's opinion if once he  
touches on a subject in which his  
hearer is not interested? Some of us,  
like Mr. Andrew Lang, for instance,  
cannot away with a person who does  
not care for Scott or Dickens. "I  
cannot read Dickens!" How many peo-  
ple make this confession with a front  
of brass, and do not seem to know  
how poor a figure they cut?" Mr. Lang  
writes with admirable enthusiasm.  
Exactly; but from their point of view  
Dickens and Scott are dull, intolerable,  
and not to be borne. To Mr. Lang  
*they* are dull and unbearable persons;  
but then to them he, and we perhaps,  
are just as uninteresting. We know  
we are right, of course, in delighting

in Mr. Pickwick, and Mr. Mantalini, and Mr. Micawber, and Sam Weller; and we do not understand how anybody can possibly not hear the ring and the clang of fine fighting in the "Lay" which opens with the "nine and twenty knights of fame" who

Quitted not their armor bright  
Neither by day nor yet by night;  
They carved at the meal  
With gloves of steel,  
And they drank the red wine through  
the helmet barred.

How that can fail to stir the blood of any warlike person it may be hard to see; but then there are plenty of people who take no interest in knightly happenings, and why they should be bored with descriptions of armor, and *réveilles*, and bugle-calls, and other incidents of personal combat, they, quite correctly from their point of view, fail to see. It is all so much dull recital of the uninteresting concomitants of battle and murder; and since they are not likely to have anything to do with either murder or battle, why should they listen? To come to quieter themes, there has been at least one considerable critic who could not read Wordsworth. Jeffrey wrote of the "Excursion" that "this will never do," and, for some of us, at all events, it never will do. But Jeffrey has been assailed with fury for his criticism, because he saw dulness in what others declared was inspiration. That Jeffrey could be declared a dull critic is at least a stimulating thought; but Wordsworthians, no doubt, think he was dull;

The Spectator.

and so will any critic be declared dull who writes at any length, and with any persistency, against the tenets of the enthusiast. Even Tennyson has been dubbed a dull critic because he composed, for a joke,

A Mr. Wilkinson, a clergyman,

as a line typical of Wordsworth at his dullest. To some minds the line, considered as a parody, is dull. Verlaine's line, "*Et surtout ne parlons pas Littérature*," is perhaps the safest counsel for those who, whether they are husband and wife, or are merely quarrelsome, are going to call each other dull because they cannot enter into each other's literary enthusiasms.

Dulness in a man or a woman is an assailable shortcoming, and always will be assailed by those who do not perceive that in accusing others of dull habits and dull intellect they do but describe the more faithfully with every added epithet their own character. They cry out for the steel that is to strike the spark, heedless of the fact that by so doing they do but proclaim themselves to be the plainest of flint. But dulness comes from within, not from without. We are all of us in some respect, many of us in many respects, "dull" to other people. The great point is gained, however, if the majority of people are not dull to us. He only goes out of his way to proclaim his own incapacity to strike sparks from flint who complains that he can find nothing in the world that fires his own imagination.



## PLEDGES AND POLICIES.

Probably no member of the Opposition would now defend, from the point of view either of propriety or of policy, the scene of Monday night in the Commons. To refuse for an hour to pay a Minister of the Crown the uncommitting compliment of a patient hearing is not good manners. It would not be good manners if the speaker, or, rather, the man who would like to speak if he could make his voice heard, were an unknown candidate on a village platform, and it does not become so by the fact that the speaker is a Secretary of State, and the place the House of Commons. Moreover, the Opposition would almost certainly have improved their position if they had listened to Mr. Lyttelton. They feared—as Mr. Balfour probably hoped—that the simple issue, Has the Prime Minister broken a pledge repeatedly given? would be obscured by the variety of allied, but not identical, questions which a trained advocate like Mr. Lyttelton would be able to introduce into the debate. But where the charge which the Prime Minister had to meet was so plain, no amount of legal ingenuity could have done much to obscure it, and the Opposition speakers who would have followed Mr. Lyttelton would have had no difficulty in once more forcing the original issue in its naked simplicity upon Mr. Balfour's unwilling notice. The motion which Sir Edward Grey is to bring forward on Tuesday would have lost none of its sting if it had been introduced with full knowledge of the Prime Minister's case. That case is not one that is likely to improve on closer acquaintance.

But, when all this has been said, it must be admitted that Monday's scene was not without its excuse. For something like two years the Opposition has

been treated with a singularly irritating indifference. A question of vast importance was sprung upon the country, and when the Opposition wished to make it a subject of discussion in Parliament they were told that they would not be given an opportunity of debating it. The ingenuity of the Liberal Members proved too much for the Government, and the fiscal controversy has not been wholly banished from the House of Commons. The Minister's next move was to use the forms of the House to make the discussion of any fiscal motion difficult, and by means of the previous question and blocking notices some measure of success was secured in this direction. When these methods seemed to have yielded all the fruit that could be got out of them, a new device was ready, and the Ministerialists walked out of the House whenever the fiscal question was in the notice-paper. Such tactics, whatever else may be said of them, are not likely to sweeten the temper of opponents, and when men who have been treated in this way for two Sessions see a chance of convicting the Prime Minister of a direct breach of a pledge, they are naturally indignant when another Minister is put up to answer for him. Outbreaks of this kind are highly contagious, and in presence of them the House of Commons quickly gets out of hand. It was in Mr. Balfour's power throughout the whole scene to restore order by taking the defence upon himself. He has done so on other occasions, and, so far as appears, there is no justification for his silence in the practice of his predecessors. It is difficult to imagine Mr. Disraeli, or Mr. Gladstone, or Lord Palmerston placing their cause in the hands of a colleague, and reserving

themselves for the close of a debate directed, as this one was, to a purely personal question. The Minister who has given a promise must in all cases be the best qualified to explain why he does not propose to keep it. Every incident in this long process has carried the degradation of Parliament a step further. From being the supreme arbiter of national policy, the House of Commons has become an assembly to which Ministers communicate so much of their policy as they think it convenient to make public, with a view to its being discussed at such length and under such restrictions as best squares with the Ministerial purpose. If the Leader of the House thinks that this limit is likely to be transgressed, he either uses his majority to suppress discussion altogether, or allows it to go on in the deliberate absence of himself and his supporters. Is it strange that a House for which the Prime Minister shows no respect should in the end come to have little respect for itself? Mr. Balfour has treated the Opposition like so many schoolboys, and it is rather late in the day to complain that they have for once shown themselves what he has sought to make them.

The debate on Sir Edward Grey's motion must, apparently, clear up any doubt that may still remain as to the terms of Mr. Balfour's promise, and the reasons which have led him to reconsider it. We should be glad to think that on the first of these points a better case can be made out than, with our present knowledge, seems at all possible. It will be a bad day for Parliamentary and party Government if a Prime Minister should ever come to think it a sufficient reason for swearing to his neighbor and disappointing him, that to do otherwise would be to his own hindrance, or rather to the hindrance of his party. It would appear that Mr. Balfour intends to reserve his

answer to Lord Hugh Cecil's question for his speech on the Vote of Censure. We regret this, because the terms of the question are so comprehensive and so searching that it would be impossible to answer it in writing, and leave any part of the case in obscurity. But Mr. Balfour may claim a right to choose his own time and method for giving the explanation demanded of him, and there are obvious advantages from the point of view of the accused person in giving it amid the excitement of a great debate. There can be no question, we imagine, that when Mr. Balfour said in Manchester, on January 27th, that the country could not be called upon to decide the colonial aspect of this question until not one, but two, elections have passed, he did not mean it to be decided by a Conference meeting while the present Parliament is still in being, and consequently when not even one Election has passed. There can be no question that when he said in the House of Commons, on March 13th, "I have over and over again said that in the course of the present Parliament we do not intend to deal with the fiscal problem," he did not mean to bring the question of preferential duties before a Colonial Conference held while the present Parliament is still in being. There can be no question, again, that when the Duke of Marlborough was instructed to say in the House of Lords, on April 11th, that the policy of the Government was that if they were again returned to power at the next General Election, they would summon a Conference of the self-governing colonies and of India, and ask it to discuss the possibilities of closer commercial union, it was to this Conference summoned after the Election, and not to a Conference meeting automatically before the Election, Mr. Balfour meant to submit the question of preferential duties. Indeed, he admits

as much when he says that when the pledge was given—or, if he prefers to put it in this way, when the intention was stated—he had forgotten all about the Conference of next year. It was so unimportant, so much a matter of course, so wholly unconnected with the great fiscal controversy to be fought out in the next Parliament, that it had altogether escaped his recollection. Yet it is before this Conference, in which India will have no part, that, down to Thursday afternoon, he would not promise not to bring forward those preferential duties which are the foundation of Mr. Chamberlain's policy. If this would not have been dealing with the fiscal problem "in the course of the present Parliament," we do not know what the words can mean. At the moment of writing, Mr. Balfour is disposed to draw a distinction between introducing the subject and taking part in the discussion of it when introduced by others. This may be in keeping with the letter of his promise, but it falls a good deal short of what the Opposition, at all events, understood to be the spirit of it.

*The Economist.*

Apart from the question of how it affects the Prime Minister's word, we do not think that the matter is of great importance. If we were in favor of preferential duties, we can imagine nothing that we should be more anxious to avoid than any appearance of dictation on the part of the colonies. They have full liberty to settle their fiscal systems for themselves, and it is only reasonable that they should leave Englishmen equally unfettered. The object, we presume, of getting this question considered before the Election is to enable Ministers to go to the country as the only true Imperialists. Considering that we undertake, and willingly undertake, nearly the entire cost of defending the colonies against attack, we do not think that they suffer any loss by the absence of any closer commercial union. At all events, we are quite sure that politicians who try to convince the English electorate that it is bound to concede such a union to its own disadvantage are no true friends of the Empire, or of the Imperial idea.

## THE FLIGHT OF BIRDS.

One of the few men to recover sight after being blind from the birth of recollection was reported to have wondered at nothing so much as the flight of the birds. "Why do not people make more fuss about them?" he said. Perhaps most people are rather blind to this daily sight, and only stop to wonder at the rarer triumphs—the flash of blue of the kingfisher, the stoop of a hawk, or the dip of a woodcock. But you may distinguish birds by the way of their flight almost as accurately as trees by the form of their branches. You may even tell the season of the

year by the variations of flight; and, apart from such subtler characteristics, it is one of the marvels of mechanics that a bird can raise itself on wings at all. Certainly nothing in their structure, not even the strangely elaborate syrinx by which their songs are made to vibrate, is so delicately fitted to the purpose as the aëration of every heavy piece in a bird's body. We all know the lightness and strength of a quill, strong enough to be used to give elasticity to a heavy whipshaft, and light enough almost to float in air on the body of its feathered wings. The

hollow of the quill is but a copy of the bones of the body. They breathe in and hold bubbles of air in every part of their tissue, like some water-weeds or the relic foam of an ebbing tide. A swallow and a swift are lighter, so to speak, than the sum of their parts, creatures of air in so real a sense that every bone is a lung, and air is the source of motion as of life. It is remarkable that those busy mechanics who would make men fly describe birds as mere types of the virtue of an inclined plane, and pay no heed to their airy lightness, the balloon principle, for which their form is designed.

Happily nothing in Nature need be studied in the laboratory; and this beauty of flight is not dependent on structural knowledge. Perhaps many birds do not consciously delight in the use of their wings. In Nigeria, where the bush is continuous, pheasants do not fly at all. Partridges in England move to and fro their feeding grounds; but they love to skim the earth, to whose tint they are colored, and use their higher flight only for safety. Moorhens prefer not to fly at all. The majority of our home birds and many of the smaller migrants move very small distances of themselves, and we look in vain for any sign that they fly, as lambs skip, for the fun of the thing. Their note of delight is song, and how few comparatively sing while flying. Curiously enough that reluctant flyer the jenny wren often launches into a little ecstatic flight across the road from hedgerow to hedgerow, a course about as long as the song he sings on the journey. That strange, unreal phantom effect of the cuckoo's notes comes less from his minor interval than the balking change of volume due to the bird's change of place during the repetition of the successive notes. We all love the lark's song of the flight, because it is borne on the flight's momentum and falls in ecstasy as the

flight is over. But the lark's ascent too is shorter than we are aware of. Such inspiration could not be maintained long, and we have never yet found a singer that could maintain it for three minutes. Nor is it always spiral. The glory of the mountain song is greatest when the wind is high, and the lark throwing itself against the centre of the force climbs straight and by no zigzag slope up the cliff of air. But even so the lark is not among the greatest of flyers. The swallows and swifts, the gulls, the pigeons, and even the rooks and starlings, among commoner birds, are of a higher rank as flyers, though we judge each by virtue of a different quality. The swallows and swifts excel all others, as we have said, in structure; and what a "benediction of the air" their coming is. The blue and white of their plumage is as rightly attuned to the medium of air as the green of the linnet to the tree-tops. How they exult in nice evasions, touching the river, breast to breast, or swooping at full speed through the broken pane to the nest in the roof-beam, or perfecting the contour of wide loops as they swing around the dome of the sycamore. Towards evening you may notice them delight to check their wings momentarily at the end of the stroke as if enjoying the dive through space, or, as it were, the smooth slide of the boat at the pause in the *remigium alarum*. The air is to them as water is to fish; and something in the forked tail of the swallow and the perceptible influence of its double rudder keeps alive a sense of the similarity. No other bird *lives* in the air. When they arrive from the great migration they are content to perch, often and for long intervals, on trees—chiefly on oaks and ashes. The reason is perhaps that these are less leafy, if we may infer by their strange affection for the wire perch. This, however, is a vagary. Normally, in

mid-season before the young are out of the nests or the nostalgia of the south is upon them, they rest not at all, but swing through the buoying element as if the cleavage of the passage round and about the eaves were instinct with the delight of a vessel homeward bound through helping seas.

The pigeon is not such a flyer as the swallow; he is neither so long in the wing nor light in the frame, and his sleepy murmur from the elm is the most home-keeping sound in Nature. But of all birds he most manifestly plays the game of flying; and perhaps the capacity of controlling the burden of his weight and carrying it at such pace through the air helps the achievement to be more conscious. Their spring flight is comparable with the wedding flight of the insects. Even those degenerate ground-pigeons in the parks attempt, in the nesting season, the distinctive caracole of the tribe. Jumping from the bough with sudden impetus and shooting into the air, they first clap their wings behind them with an audible report; then rising at a sharp angle for twenty feet or more, stop of a sudden, toss back the wings till the points touch over the back, and so slip down the other side of the airy slope. They will repeat the gambol, rising to these imaginary apices and falling from them, at intervals through any bright spring day; and the iris of the sunlight on the burnished breast gains a lustre from the final dive into the black firs that all doves delight in. So glistens and darkens the sail of a vessel as it "shifts the sun anew" at the pivot of the changing tack.

Gulls come nearest to the swallows as inhabitants of the air; and more than swallows appear to be integral to the air. The way to see a gull is from a cliff-top, as he floats below you slowly sinking to the sea. The wings scarcely shiver. The blue-gray and

whiteness of the feathers give an illusion as if you saw the waters of the sea through this translucent spirit of the elements; it wholly baffles you to know where, in the inter-space, the bird is floating—close to the mirror of the sea or up to the midway ledge of the calcareous cliff. He is born of air and water and floats as much more lightly than other birds on the dancing waves, as he uses more buoyantly than they the secret of the plane. Yet in their raging wind and waves overwhelm and drown many hundred gulls; and for all their love of the elements many are learning to prefer the land and the wake of the plough before the seas and the hard hunt for fish.

The delight of rooks to be blown about the sky, and the ordered wheelings of starlings in massed battalions, are worthy of close study and may reveal many things, among others, we believe, the arrangement of units and the continued association of pairs. But these are autumn sights. Here and now through the window different flights proclaim the birds. The starling bustles in its quick fussy flight, necessary for all birds with short tailfeathers, to the hole in the oak. The woodpecker makes for a like bourne in jerky festoons of flight. The flycatcher, from the rose-tree as base, makes little sallies a yard or two away, hovering and turning like no other bird than a humming bird. The long-tailed tit jerks and floats across his short stages; and the lesser tits seem to jump rather than fly from bough to bough as the wagtail from patch to patch. These and the others all proclaim their several characters, as a man may by his manner of entering a room, by a few flaps of the wing. Certainly "the way of a bird in the air" was rightly put high among marvels by the wise man of old.



## COMPULSORY GREEK.

During the controversy on "Compulsory Greek" light has been thrown on the curious differences that exist among different human minds. Several gentlemen and one or two ladies have explained, in the columns of *Nature*, their own sufferings and their own limitations. They were scientifically bent, yet they were obliged to pass, at Cambridge, a preliminary examination in Greek. They tell us about the methods whereby they acquired the irreducible minimum of the language of the Gods, of Homer, and of Sophocles. They learned a little of the grammar, they got the cribs by heart, and knew the Greek words by head-mark; and thus, with much waste of their precious youthful days, they just managed to satisfy examiners. They forgot in a few weeks the little they had known, and as to the existence of any literary merit or charm in what they had read, they were absolutely unconscious of it—and no wonder.

Minds of this cast have been cruelly treated! It is a burning shame, and nothing less, that budding "scientists" should be set to cut Greek blocks with the razors of their modern minds. But their academic tormentors will say that they were unaware of the existence of minds of this peculiar quality. "We did not know that people *could* be such idiots," they will explain. It was their business to know, and to adjust the system of education accordingly.

What is sauce for the scientific goose is also sauce for the classical and literary gander. I entirely agree in the opinion that scientific minds, as a rule, are incapable of Greek. And Mr. Darwin himself could never learn German. In the *Athenæum* for April 1, a writer

on "N rays" suggests that the staff of M. Blondlot's laboratory at Nancy perhaps could not express themselves in English. Perhaps the scientific intelligence cannot master alien tongues. In that case scientists ought not to be forced to waste the minds that might be discovering M rays in poetry and prose of which they will never discover the merit. Perhaps M or N or Z rays are not more "useful" than Greek, but one never knows. They may contribute to the "synthesis of sugars," and make these commodities cheaper—a boon which we can never expect from Greek. But if Greek is not to be "compulsory," why should mathematics be "compulsory"? Some minds are as incapable of mathematics as "scientists" are incapable of Greek or of literature.

My own experience of mathematics is exactly parallel to the scientific men's experience of Greek. By the cruelty of an effete University, I was doomed to master two whole books of Euclid or be ploughed in "Smalls." Nobody could teach me Euclid, still less Algebra. My brain and nervous system broke down; mine eyes were filled with childish tears. I sobbed hysterically. That way lay madness. Of Arithmetic I was equally incapable. Buying a Colenso and a Euclid, and retiring into seclusion, I acquired Arithmetic, to this extent, that I pleased examiners by triumphantly proving "Therefore a penny = 240l." They let me through, none the less, perhaps allowing my Latin prose to compensate for my mathematical imbecility. I did know, for a week, two books of Euclid well enough to pass upon; Euclid, granting his premises, is a logical and not uninteresting writer.

But my youth was embittered. I cannot say that my time was wasted, because it was worth nothing (to Science), and does not count. In other respects compulsory arithmetic was as hard on me as compulsory Euripides on the children of Science. Macaulay, Tennyson, Sir William Hamilton were, I believe, on my mathematical level, and could not take honors at Cambridge, though all of them were at least as clever (in a useless way) as the ordinary Science man. All were victims of compulsion.

Yet, surely, *something* must be compulsory! Mathematics, obviously, ought not to be, because some people, above the standard of idiocy, are incapable of mathematics. Greek ought not to be compulsory, because Greek literature (or any literature, probably) is empty nonsense to the young scientific men and women. There must, nevertheless, be some test to prove whether the student knows anything at all, has taken any trouble at all, or not. Would it not suffice merely to examine every candidate in what he thinks he knows, in the study which he professes that he has pursued and intends to pursue? If he can pass in that, be it history, electricity, conchology, classics, or what not, let him pass and go on his learned way rejoicing. I am old-fashioned enough to think that the historian should have to pass in Latin, because charters and other non-classical documents and chronicles are couched in a low form of that language. But the modern historian can do very well without Thucydides, Polybius, and Aristotle. Greek ought not to be exhibited to the scientific man; it makes him so angry, except when he is misusing it to coin scientific terminology.

Longman's Magazine.

The objection may be urged that, as very few boys will learn Greek if it is not compulsory, schoolmasters will starve. But that is only the usual "rub in the green" of political economy. You make sugar of beetroot, and the West Indies starve. You invent a new machine, and working men starve. You invent new photographic methods of reproducing drawings, and wood-engravers starve. Economically speaking, all this is just as it should be, or must be, and the same rule applies to schoolmasters. They must apply their energies otherwise. No doubt many of them are not too stupid to learn science, as Cato learned Greek, late in life. The elder members of the profession must blandly perish in the struggle for existence, like other species out of harmony with their environment. Things will adjust themselves, and, in a generation or two, only the people who deserve to learn Greek will learn it. I do not see why German should not be compulsory, because German is useful, and, besides, is much more difficult and distasteful than Greek, demanding more application and making less appeal to the useless literary taste. One would be more sorry for schoolmasters—nay, there might be no prospect of starvation before them at all—if they had taught Greek in a sensible way, and made even the beginnings of the study interesting. But they ground at grammar—empty grammar—without even telling us who the Greeks were, and why they have enjoyed a considerable reputation for some centuries. The awkward position of schoolmasters is due to their own want of intelligence, and stereotyped, wrong-headed methods.

Andrew Lang.

## BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

E. P. Dutton & Co. are soon to publish a volume of letters by Count Paul Hatzfeldt, the late German Ambassador to London. The letters cover the period of the Franco-German war. They are written by the Count from the headquarters of the King of Prussia and are addressed to his wife.

Henry Holt & Co. are to publish "A Maid of Japan" by Mrs. Hugh Fraser. Few writers can have had better opportunities for becoming acquainted with Japanese character, as Mrs. Fraser was for several years in Tokio with her husband, who was British Minister to Japan. Mrs. Fraser's "A Diplomat's Wife in Japan" has been widely read.

There is a Blind Library at Oxford which is probably unique. It is housed in the City Library, and its object is to supply every book necessary for the University examinations. It contains now nearly five hundred volumes, and the number is rapidly increasing. Most of these books have necessarily been written by hand, and are the only copies. The library has done much to stimulate the higher education of the blind, and applications for the loan of books come from intending undergraduates in all parts.

A young Greek, secretary to Sejanus, murdered because he knows too much of the favorite's plots against the imperial household; his sister, a beautiful dancing girl, thrown into prison on suspicion of sharing his knowledge; and the girl's lover, a charioteer in the Roman circus—these, with the principal historical personages of the period, play the leading parts in Walter S. Cramp's novel, "Psyche, A Romance of

the Reign of Tiberius." By an ingenious interweaving of fiction with fact, the same train of events that releases Psyche from the imprisonment which she shares with the ill-fated Agrippina, widow of Germanicus, rouses the Emperor from his revels at Capri, and sends Sejanus to his fate. Little, Brown & Co.

That "the developments of scientific and psychical truth now offer a vast array of detail explaining and illustrating the truth taught by Jesus" is the keynote of "The Outlook Beautiful," the latest addition to Lillian Whiting's popular series, and to minds that incline to reinforce their faith by restating it in the terminology of certain schools of current thought her presentation will be helpful and inspiring. To the belief in immortality, for example, is contributed the suggestion that "the ethereal body is in a state of far higher vibration than the physical body," and that "as water, ice, steam and vapor are merely different conditions of the same element, so are spirit and matter." Miss Whiting's facility in quotation serves her as well in this as in her earlier volumes—Cardinal Newman, Bishop Brooks, Browning, Stephen Phillips, Professor Royce, Dr. Wm. T. Harris, Mrs. Besant, Emerson, Mrs. Stowe, Alexander Fullerton, George Eliot, John Milton Scott, Frederic Myers, Sir Oliver Lodge, Minot Savage, and "Imperator, the lofty and pure intelligence who controlled the automatic hand-writing of the Rev. W. Stalnton Moses" being among her authorities; and she draws upon the testimony of spiritualism and the results of theosophical inquiry as impartially as upon the theories of physical science. Little, Brown & Co.

## A VICARAGE GARDEN.

I love your garden's green repose,  
Shut safe from outer dust and din,  
The jet your wayward fountain throws,  
The fish beneath of golden fin;

The sweep of sward, the beds of bloom,  
The stately cedar's solemn shade,  
The arched lime-alley's cloistral gloom  
For lonely meditation made;

The terraced walk, the ivied wall,  
The music of the floundering mill,  
And, like an arm embracing all,  
The ridge of Chiltern's chalky hill.

Here, faithful to her wedded vows,  
All day the mother-thrush will sit,  
Wee masons toil among the boughs,  
Or tiny lovers flirt and flit;

And sometimes, from his reedy bound  
Borne faintly past the poplar-stems,  
Comes, half a silence, half a sound,  
The murmur of the travelled Thames.

Yes, happy bowers, I love you well,  
Nor least I love you for that here  
Sage Wisdom and the Graces dwell,  
With mirth and hospitable cheer;

While hope and aspiration bright,  
And faith, with eyes upon the goal,  
And love of all things fair, unite  
To deck a garden for the soul;

Where those perennial fountains spring,  
That in the heart's waste places play,  
And on dead Summer's face can fling  
The smile of everlasting May.

*James Rhoades.*

The Speaker.

## THE MAD SPINNER.

Humming wheel, oh! humming wheel,  
—Hush my heart, for I must not feel—  
The wind is driving in from the sea  
And it drives the sound of a voice to me.

Flickering flame, flickering flame!  
Did you start and whisper a name?

I wait by the fire as I sit and spin  
For the latch to lift and the Dawn  
come in.

Howl and crack! howl and crack!  
The waves are strewn the shore with  
wrack,  
But they hold my life and the heart  
of me  
Fast, fast, fast in the heart of the sea.

Whirling wool! whirling wool!  
White, white, white, and soft and cool!  
God's fingers turn in the whistling sleet  
And He spins and I spin for a winding  
sheet.

Spin, spin! I am Fate who spins,  
Spins till the Judgment Day begins  
And the great sea, shrinking, gives up  
her dead  
And my Love comes back to me out of  
her bed.

*Dorothy Frances Gurney.*

The Academy.

## TO A CHATELAINE.

Birds in your garden once again  
(The old-time garden that you love)  
Wake to the touch of silver rain,  
Sing while the gold sun mounts above.

So runs it still, the ancient tale,  
Through immemorial years re-told:  
The dreaming bride behind the veil,  
The conquering Prince with spurs of  
gold.

And those that say and those that sing  
(As thousands dead have said and  
sung)

Do but enregister the spring,  
But praise that world where all is  
young.

Oh, many a dream it fades and dies,  
And many a hope it lives in vain;  
But never dream of April skies,  
And never hope of soft spring rain.

Then, for your ancient pleasance'  
sake  
With all its fair sequestered ways,  
Dear Lady of the Garden, take  
This book of garden dreams and days..

*Rosamund Marriott Watson.*

Fall Mall Magazine.

